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MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT OF ENGLAND,

G. B.
Hist.

DURING

THE REGENCY,

1811—1820.

FROM ORIGINAL FAMILY DOCUMENTS.

BY

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS,
K.G.

Samuel Mayer

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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OF

THE COURT OF ENGLAND

DURING

THE REGENCY.

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MEMOIRS
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THE REGENCY.

CHAPTER I.

THE urgency of public business, and the anomalous position of the State, prevented the usual prorogation of parliament. Legislators could not be permitted to make holiday while the throne was apparently without an occupant, and the government without a head. The declared state of the King created a vacancy in the first power of the legislature; and till the nation could agree upon the manner in which his acknowledged successor should exercise his authority, there must be an interregnum—a position, for a government of such magnitude as the British empire, embarrassed by the most serious difficulties at home and abroad, sufficiently grave to create anxiety in the minds of all classes of politicians. Therefore, there was no Christmas in 1810—11—in the ordinary sense—for the members of the two Houses of Parliament. Indeed, sympathy with the afflicted monarch, and speculations arising out of the important change then impending, made it a dull season throughout the kingdom.

The parliamentary conflict on the question of the Regency, which had been carried on with so much animation towards the close of the old, was renewed with increased vigour at the commencement of the new year.

The fifth resolution,[1] a very important one, as it related to the care of the King's person during the continuance of his malady, was debated on the 1st of January; and an amendment brought forward by Lord Gower, to lessen the expense of his Majesty's household, and to circumscribe the Queen's authority over it; which was strongly supported by the Opposition, and carried by a majority of thirteen —a result so unfavourable to the ministry, that on the next day, Mr. Perceval, by means of an amendment of his own on that which had been carried, endeavoured to get the sanction of the House to the resolution as it stood originally. But, though he took care to be supported by all the available strength of the Government, he was again beaten by a majority of three. Apparently not satisfied with these indications of opinion, they tried a third experiment, in the House of Lords; for when, on the 4th of the same month, Lord Liverpool brought up the five resolutions, he made a powerful appeal for the Queen; asking merely that her Majesty should be permitted to have the control of the household for twelve months, and promising that no removal of the higher officers should take place during that time. But again the decision was against the Government, by a majority of thirteen; and the amended resolution became law.

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[1] "That it appears to this committee that the care of his Majesty's royal person, during the continuance of his Majesty's illness, should be committed to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, and that her Majesty should have power to remove from, and to nominate and appoint such persons as she shall think proper, to the several offices in his Majesty's household, and to dispose, order, and manage all other matters and things relating to the care of his Majesty's royal person, during the time aforesaid, and that for the better enabling her Majesty to discharge this important trust, it is also expedient that a Council should be appointed, to advise and assist her Majesty in the several matters aforesaid, and with power, from time to time, as they may see cause, to examine upon oath the physicians and others attending his Majesty's person, touching the state of his Majesty's health, and all matters relative thereto."

There was previously much discussion among the peers, respecting the other resolutions—particularly the first and second. The Marquis of Lansdowne opposed the first, and proposed an amendment, to remove the restrictions on the power of the Regent to create peers; this after an animated debate, in which Lord Grenville took a prominent part, was carried by a majority of three. Lord Liverpool then proposed an amendment to the second resolution, to meet the objections that had been stated by Lord Grenville; and this the Government were allowed to carry by a majority of six.

These preliminaries having been arranged by the two Houses of Parliament, certain persons were appointed by each, on the 8th, to wait on the Queen and the Prince; and on the 10th, her Majesty, at Windsor, graciously replied to the address of the deputation, accepting the trust the nation had reposed in her, evidently fully sensible of its responsibilities; and on the following day, the other deputation at Carlton House, met with a more stately, but equally gracious reception, his Royal Highness, in his answer to their address, satisfying himself with an allusion to the restrictions as unnecessary.

The Regency, though the principal parties seemed thus far agreed, was not yet an accomplished fact. There was still legislative work to do before such a change in the government of the country could be established; and the two Houses continued their labours. On the 14th, the House of Commons acceded to the amended resolutions of the Lords. On the 15th, Parliament was opened by Commission; and for several days the Commons debated a Regency Bill for the more complete and exact understanding of the relations that were to exist between the nation and their new governor. After many animated debates, the Bill passed the third reading on the 23rd.

In the argument on the Regency, it has been acknowledged, by eminent authority, that the advantage lay with the Opposition:[1] but such a superiority did not bring their leaders any nearer to office. There were questions to be considered with respect to a change of government, in which reason could not be permitted to enter—questions of pounds, shillings, and pence, rather than of oratorical merit.

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[1] "But if the merits of the arguments adduced on both sides on this occasion are considered without reference to the objects of present advantage which either party had at heart, no doubt can be entertained

However important had been the discussions carried on in the lower house of the legislature, they were thrown into the shade by the more influential debates that followed in the upper house. But, before we enter into any detail of the great part played in these debates by Lord Grenville, it is necessary to call the reader's attention to his peculiar position, and the causes that influenced his conduct throughout these proceedings.

A remarkable letter has already been published,[1] fully explaining his ideas on the unhappy contingency of a sovereign under the visitation which had again deprived the King of ability to perform the regal functions. It should be borne in mind, that at the period this was indited, the writer was subordinately in the administration of Mr. Pitt, and one of the most promising members of that great political party, with which this illustrious statesman never ceased to be identified. He was also in direct opposition to another party, strong in the possession of much popular sympathy, as well as in the activity and talent of its leading supporters, of which the Prince of Wales was regarded as the acknowledged

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that the Whigs, both in reason and on precedent, had the best of the dispute."—Sir Archibald Alison's "History of Europe." Vol. IX. Chap. LXIV., p. 14. Ninth Edition.

[1] "Courts and Cabinets of George the Third," Vol. I. p. 448.

leader. The principles of the Opposition, as enunciated by several of the personal friends of the heir apparent, were not likely to create confidence in the servants of the crown, and the young minister recently distinguished by the favour of his sovereign, by whom he had been marked for higher official honours,[1] was bound by gratitude as well as by principle to watch over the interests of his master. His feelings, when thus circumstanced, he has eloquently expressed:

"I suppose there never was a situation in which any set of men ever had, at once, so many points to decide, so especially affecting their own honour, character, and future situation; their duty to their country in a most critical situation, and their duty to their unhappy master, to whom they are unquestionably bound by ties of gratitude and honour, independent of considerations of public duty towards him. I hope God, who has been pleased to afflict us with this severe and heavy trial, will enable us to go through it honestly, conscientiously, and in a manner not dishonourable to our characters."[2]

How he and his coadjutors conducted themselves under this ordeal, has been recorded by the historian.

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[1] "Nothing could be handsomer than the manner in which the King acceded to the proposal which Pitt made him, of bringing Lord Chatham and myself forward in the manner then intended. He has since spoken to me on the subject, in the most flattering terms, and has shown an eagerness to facilitate the arrangement, by proposing expedients for removing the only difficulty which delays it."—Courts and Cabinets of George III. Vol. I. p. 401.

[2] "Courts and Cabinets of George the Third." Vol. I. p. 443.

Many changes had occurred since that letter was penned. William Wyndham Grenville had risen from his subordinate post (Vice-President of the Committee of Trade) to some of the most responsible offices of administration, and the services of the statesman had been acknowledged by a patent of nobility. Still more remarkable changes had occurred—Lord Grenville had found it necessary to quit the party of whose policy he had so long been a most able advocate, because it withstood those requirements he considered the force of events and opinions had rendered imperative; and believing in the attainment of more enlightened views, with the assistance of the party he had opposed, he became a leader of the Opposition, and the associate and adviser of the Prince, whose temporary possession of rule he found himself obliged to guard with so many restrictions.

The changes had not stopped here—from Opposition he had been called to power, and with the favour of the sovereign, to whom he owed his distinctions, he conducted a Government, which though short lived, was eminent among administrations, for the grandeur of its objects. In the development of what he regarded as the noblest ideas of government, he and his party were driven out of office by the interposition of the King; and with the return of his rivals to royal favour, he again became the principal exponent of Opposition policy, and an adviser of the Opposition heir apparent. And now the last link in the chain of contrarieties was attained —the King's incapacity had again demanded the appointment of a deputy, and the former suggestor of the restrictions upon the Regent of 1788, found himself opposed to those whose duty it was to advocate them, and was generally regarded as the particular guardian of the interests of the Regent of 1811.

In this singular revolution of position and principles, Lord Grenville behaved with consummate tact and judgment. Apparently under the influence of the idea that the concurrent changes had rendered his own absolute, he entered upon the duties of his position without any sense of embarrassment from the want of harmony in the Past and the Present; yet avoiding, as much as possible, comparisons and retrospections that might give his rivals an advantage, and create uneasiness in his client. He was not long in making up his mind as to the share he was to take in these important transactions; and was solicitous that the party he may be said to have represented, should display itself with every available advantage.

On the 25th of January, the Regency Bill was introduced into the House of Lords, when on the discussion of the clause limiting the restriction to the 1st of February, 1812, Lord Grenville, alluding to the opinion then gaining ground of the greater severity of the King's present attack, proposed an amendment for the purpose of reducing the interval to six months. This was seconded by Lord Grey, and after having been feebly opposed by Lord Sidmouth, was agreed to.[1] The Government contended with the Opposition on two other points, and were beaten by majorities of twelve and nine; but on the 28th, on the order of the day being read for taking into consideration the report on the Bill, absentees were allowed to vote by proxy, which was not suffered in Committee, and availing themselves of this advantage, they negatived Lord Grenville's amendment by a majority of seventeen. The other amendments were disposed of in the same way, and the Bill, with the exception of trifling verbal amendments, passed in the state it came from the Commons. One or two conferences subsequently took place between the two Houses, and on the 5th of February, the royal assent was given to it by Commission.

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[1] It was on this occasion that the Opposition Lords commenced

Thus was the Prince of Wales, at last, inducted into an office of distinction and power, that had more than once evaded him, when almost on the point of taking possession; and now this great matter settled, the all-absorbing question arose—the chief of the Opposition having become the head of the State, who were to be his responsible advisers? A conviction had recently been rapidly forcing itself upon the public mind, that the party with whom his royal highness had so long been identified, must, as a matter of course, possess his confidence and his favour, and that from the men of talent and influence who adorned its ranks, a popular administration would be formed.

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their attack on Lord Eldon, for his alleged illegal conduct during the King's incapacity in 1801 and 1804.—See Twiss's "Life of Lord Eldon," Vol. I. p. 453. Third Edition.

"The Prince had determined," states one of the most gifted of these distinguished statesmen, "the moment he should have entered upon his office, to have changed the administration, and a new ministry has been arranged. Lord Grenville was to have been First Lord of the Treasury; Lord Holland, First Lord of the Admiralty; Lord Grey, Ponsonby, and Whitbread, Secretaries of State; Lord Erskine, Speaker of the House of Lords; and the Great Seal was to have been put in Commission. Piggott and I were to have had our former offices of Attorney and Solicitor General."[1]

From this, it would appear that there was a perfect understanding between the Prince and his party. But now comes a very curious passage in the history of the times, which adds another to the list of contradictions already noticed. The Minister was far from being unmindful of his critical position. The answer which the Prince had returned to his communication in October 1809, must have made him fully aware of the feelings he had created in that quarter; but it is evident that, in such an apparently desperate position, Mr. Perceval did not despair. His faculties for the kind of conflict upon which he was now to enter, were stimulated by the earnest opposition of his rivals. With one, the most powerful of the circle, he was drawn into a personal contest, that added considerably to the bitterness of the struggle.

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[1] "Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly, Vol. II. p. 365. Another rumour gave a different arrangement:—"Lord Grey to be First Lord of the Treasury. Grenville, who will not give up auditorship, and has lately, in his correspondence with Perceval, called it a check on the Treasury has not, I suspect, nerves to stand the proposing a Bill to make the two offices tenable together, and for so short a time. [This is droll.] Ponsonby, Third Secretary; Lansdowne, Ireland. Surely, Whitbread can never long agree with Lord Grenville; Brougham, to be Secretary of Admiralty, *vice* Croker. Surely, *infra dig.* Horner to be Secretary of Treasury; a very good appointment."—Diary in "Life of William Wilberforce." By his Sons. Vol. III. p. 492. Second Edition

Lord Grenville still held the office of Auditor of the Exchequer, which at so peculiar a state of the government conferred on him a grave responsibility regarding the issues of money from the Treasury. Mr. Perceval first desired that the Privy Seal should be put to the necessary orders; but though the Keeper, Lord Westmoreland, was willing to use the signet for such a purpose, the clerk, Mr. Larpent, whose signature was equally necessary, became alarmed at the risk he might incur, and declined to be an accessory, on the plea of scruples of conscience, arising from his oaths of office. Foiled in this direction, the Minister turned to the Treasury, and had warrants issued for the sums he needed; but when these, in due course, came before the Auditor of the Exchequer, he very properly hesitated to authorize them. The legality of the transaction was more than doubtful; and in the exercise of a sound discretion, Lord Grenville applied to Mr. Perceval for time to consider the nature and extent of the duties which this new and unexpected course of proceeding imposed upon him, and requiring to know when the public service demanded that the money should be issued. In the reply, it was stated, that "according to the usual course of supplying the weekly issues to the army and navy, it would be necessary that sums should be issued for both services, beyond the amount of the existing credit at the Exchequer, either on the morrow, or the next day at farthest; *but if an actual issue could be made within six days, no serious inconvenience was apprehended.*"

Armed with such an authority for delay, Lord Grenville then desired the opinions of the law officers of the Crown. It should be borne in mind that the Attorney and Solicitor-General, to whom he referred the case for decision, were the coadjutors and friends of the Minister. They shortly gave in their joint opinion, that they "did not think the warrant of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury *was in law a sufficient authority imperative upon the Auditor, nor consequently a legal sanction for his proceeding to obey the same;* nor that any discretion was left to him by the law on this occasion, for the exercise of which he would not be responsible."

The Minister and the Lords of the Treasury, when they forwarded this decision to the Auditor of the Exchequer, accompanied it with the intimation that they were ready to take upon themselves the responsibility of sanctioning an act thus clearly pronounced illegal. This, however, was very far from satisfying the scruples of such a man as Lord Grenville; and he wrote a dignified and statesmanlike reply, in which he said: "If I could be satisfied of *the propriety* of my doing what is required, there is no personal responsibility which I would not readily incur for the public interests; but I cannot persuade myself that I could obey these warrants without a breach of my official duty on that point which is above all others peculiarly obligatory on the person placed in the situation of Auditor of the Exchequer; *nor without a high and criminal violation both of positive statute, and also of the essential principles of our monarchical and parliamentary constitution.*"

"I am told" he continued, "that I must act on my own discretion for the exercise of which I must alone be responsible. This responsibility if it legally attaches upon me, I cannot transfer to any other persons, and least of all to your Lordships, whatever willingness you have expressed to take it upon yourselves. Nay, attempting to do so would itself be criminal; tending to confound the official relations in which I have the honour to stand towards your Lordships, and to annul those checks which the law has established for insuring the faithful discharge of our respective duties, and thereby the security of the public treasure. But I beg leave humbly to submit that the law has, in truth, invested me with no discretion on this subject. The exigencies of the public service, which your Lordships have condescended to detail to me in these your warrants, are matters of State, of which, as Auditor of the Exchequer, I have no knowledge, and can take no cognizance."

Lord Grenville then proceeds to decline compliance with the requisition of the warrants, "but with all due respect," and ends by suggesting to the Government a course which would remove the serious difficulty in which they were placed. This advice, Mr. Perceval found himself obliged to follow, and having laid the correspondence on the subject before parliament, with some very illogical remarks respecting his view of the necessity of the application, he brought forward a resolution, the object of which was to obtain the proper authority of the legislature for the immediate issue of the required funds, and after an animated debate, in which Lord Temple distinguished himself, it was agreed to without a division, on an amendment that the issues of public money should be confined to the army and navy, and to no other branch of the government service.

The result of this transaction must have been peculiarly distasteful to the Minister, and he and his party exhibited their discomfiture by circulating invidious comparisons of the conduct of their opponent as Auditor of the Exchequer, when in office, and when out: but the cases were by no means parallel, and there could not be a question that however Lord Grenville might have been influenced in the first instance by expediency, in the last he stood upon the solid foundation of right and law. Still there was room for some smart reflections upon the Auditor's consistency, and they were not spared; and representations were freely made, assailing that incorruptible spirit which had distinguished his political career.

It was at this period that the grand manœuvre was developed, the object of which was to induce the Regent to abandon his well-known intention to change the Government. This movement has been variously described, but it was managed with so much artifice, that the most active participators in it have hitherto escaped detection. Sir Samuel Romilly, a shrewd observer, and intelligent actor in the political drama then performing, has exposed a little of the mystery, but left much unexplained. We will endeavour to assist the reader to a more complete explanation. To begin with the most important personage in the transaction, it is by no means clear that his Royal Highness entertained, or was likely to entertain, any views except such as appeared to be most to his advantage. His political notions must have been rather loose at any time, but having long since ceased to enjoy the society of such powerful exponents of a liberal policy as his intimates of former years, he had felt a diminished interest in their ideas. Their successors, Lords Grey and Grenville exercised infinitely less influence over his mind, from a deficiency in those social attractions which rendered Fox pre-eminently qualified to be his preceptor, and companion. The only survivor of that brilliant political coterie that rendered Carlton House the head quarters of Opposition, was Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and his principles sat quite as loosely upon him, as did those of his royal patron. Sheridan too, imagined that he had been ill-treated by the two distinguished leaders of the Whigs, simply because, when they had the power, they did not advance him to any of those high offices, the higher emoluments of which particularly suited his qualifications. He did not anticipate better treatment from them should they again be intrusted with the formation of a Government; and was not indisposed to place difficulties in the way of that event, could such be accomplished with safety and with profit. At this particular time, Sheridan's friendly host at Richmond Lodge, Lord Sidmouth, was in frequent correspondence with the Minister,[1] and what is almost as remarkable as the destruction of Mr. Pitt's letters, referred to in a former work,[2] this correspondence has been suppressed.

It is stated in a work of some celebrity,[3] that as soon as the Regency Bill had passed, the Prince, "who had hitherto maintained a strict reserve with respect to his intentions, signified to Mr. Adam his pleasure that Lord Grenville should wait upon him. He then," adds the writer, "*in the most gracious manner* expressed to that noble lord *his wish* that he should, in conjunction with Lord Grey, prepare the answer which his Royal Highness was in a few days to return to the Houses. The same confidential task was entrusted, also, to Lord Moira, with an express desire that he should consult with Lord Grey and Lord Grenville on the subject. But this co-operation, as I understand, the two noble lords declined."

This is very curious. According to this statement, Lord Grenville is sent for, and a particular task, as a mark of especial confidence, imposed upon him—and then—Lord Moira is asked to do exactly the same thing, but to consult with Lords Grey and Grenville as to the manner in which it should be done. But this the two noble lords naturally declined.

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[1] "Life of Lord Sidmouth, Vol. III., p. 32.

[2] "Courts and Cabinets," Vol. III., p. 142.

[3] Moore's "Life of Sheridan." Third Edition. Vol. II., p. 385.

Mr. Moore then proceeds to find fault with the answer, which, he states, Lord Grenville prepared; the defects, by a remarkable coincidence, had previously struck the object of his biography, who, it seems, had endorsed his copy of it with the following sentence: "Grenville's and Grey's proposed answer from the Prince to the address of the two Houses—*very flimsy, and attempting to cover Grenville's conduct and consistency, in supporting the present restrictions, at the expense of the Prince.*[1] The animus of this is sufficiently evident. It is then stated that Lord Grenville's answer was transmitted to the Prince, "who strongly objecting," as we are told, to every part of it, "*acceded to the suggestion of Sheridan,*" that a new form of answer should be written, and sent for the approval of Lords Grenville and Grey. This new form was presented to Lord Grey at Holland House by Sheridan; which interview, as the biographer unnecessarily adds, "ended unsatisfactorily to both parties."[2]

On the 11th of January, the answer "drawn up *by the Prince and Sheridan,* was adopted."

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[1] "Life of Sheridan," Vol. II., p. 388. *Note.*

[2] In a statement subsequently drawn up by Sheridan for his own justification, he acknowledges: "I certainly did, with more warmth than was, *perhaps,* discreet, comment on the paper proposed to be substituted; and *there ended,* with no good effect, our interview."—Moore's Life of Sheridan, Vol. II., p. 401.—Interpreted, this evidently means, that, relying on the favour of the Prince, he exhibited more than his usual effrontery on this occasion, and, having sufficiently excited the indignation of Lord Grey, took his departure—*perhaps,* chuckling at his success. Both Lords Grey and Holland gave Moore an account of this interview, which he relates in his Diary.—See "Memoirs," &c. Edited by Lord John Russell.

Lords Grenville and Grey addressed a remonstrance to the Prince, in which they stated that "the circumstances which had occurred respecting his Royal Highness's answer to the two Houses, had induced them most humbly to solicit permission to submit to his Royal Highness the following considerations, with the undisguised sincerity which the occasion seemed to require; but with every expression that could best convey their respectful duty, and inviolable attachment. When his Royal Highness did Lord Grenville the honour, through Mr. Adam, to command his attendance, it was *distinctly expressed to him*, that his Highness had condescended to select him, in conjunction with Lord Grey, *to be consulted with as* the public and responsible advisers *of that answer*; and Lord Grenville could never forget *the gracious terms* in which his Royal Highness had the goodness to lay these *his orders* upon them. It was also on the same ground of public and responsible advice, that Lord Grey, *honoured in like manner*, by the most gracious expression of his Royal Highness's confidence on this subject, applied himself to the consideration of it conjointly with Lord Grenville. They could not but feel the difficulty of the undertaking which required them to reconcile two objects essentially different—to uphold and distinctly to manifest that unshaken adherence to his Royal Highness's past and present opinion, which consistency and honour required; but to conciliate, at the same time, the feelings of the two Houses, by expressions of confidence and affection, and to lay the foundation of that good understanding between his Royal Highness and the Parliament, the establishment of which must be the first wish of every man who is truly attached to his Royal Highness, and who knows the value of the Constitution of his country. Lord Grey and Lord Grenville were far from the presumption of believing that their humble endeavours for the execution of so difficult a task might not be susceptible of many and great amendments.

"The draft which they humbly submitted to his Royal Highness was considered by them as open to every remark which might occur to his Royal Highness's better judgment. On every occasion, but more especially in the preparation of his Royal Highness's first act of government, it would have been no less their desire than their duty to have profited by all such objections, and to have laboured to accomplish in the best manner they were able, every command which his Royal Highness might have been pleased to lay upon them. Upon the objects to be obtained, there could be no difference of sentiment. These, such as above-described, were, they confidently believed, not less important in his Royal Highness's view of the subject, than in that which they themselves had ventured to express. But they would be wanting in that sincerity and openness by which they could alone hope, however imperfectly, to make any return for that gracious confidence with which his Royal Highness had condescended to honour them, if they suppressed the expression of their deep concern, in finding that their humble endeavours in his Royal

Highness's service *had been submitted to the judgment of another person,* by whose advice his Royal Highness had been guided in his final decision, on a matter, on which they alone had, however unworthily, been honoured with his Royal Highness's commands. It was their most sincere and ardent wish that, in the arduous station which his Royal Highness was about to fill, he might have the benefit of the public advice and responsible services of those men, whoever they might be, by whom his Royal Highness's glory and the interests of the country could best be promoted. It would be with unfeigned distrust of their own means of discharging such duties that they could, in any case, venture to undertake them; and, in this humble, but respectful representation which they had presumed to make of their feelings on this occasion, they were conscious of being actuated not less by their dutiful and grateful attachment to his Royal Highness, than by those principles of constitutional responsibility, the maintenance of which they deemed essential to any hope of a successful administration of the public interests."

"On receiving this representation," we are told by Mr. Moore, "his Royal Highness lost no time in communicating it to Sheridan, who proud of the influence attributed to him by the noble writers, and *now more than ever stimulated to make them feel its weight,* employed the whole weight of his shrewdness and ridicule in exposing *the stately tone of dictation* which, according to his view, was assumed throughout this paper, and in picturing to the Prince *the state of* *tutelage he might expect* under ministers who began thus early with their lectures."[1]

There appears to be little doubt that every engine was about this time set at work that could be made to assist the object of the Minister. It was hinted to the Prince that if he maintained the present administration, they were ready to prove themselves the most attentive guardians of his interests, while the Whig leaders were notoriously an intractable set, who were much more likely to try to keep him in leading-strings. It was represented to the Queen, that the conduct of those mischievous men who had circumscribed her influence, by their amendment respecting her Majesty's care of the King's person, was an insult which warned her what might be expected from them, were they permitted to supersede the King's faithful servants, who had ever shown themselves mindful of her Majesty's interest, happiness and dignity. The Prince was reminded of the part the Whigs had taken in the hostile proceedings against his brother the Duke of York—a subject that never failed to excite his Royal Highness's rage and anger; and the Queen was alarmed by references to their reputed pledge to bring in the Catholics as soon as the chief offices of the state were at their disposal—a source of as much apprehension to her Majesty as it had been to her afflicted consort. Those ladies who were known to exercise most influence over the Prince, were appealed to, and are said to have proved zealous advocates of Mr. Perceval. Shortly after, his Royal

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[1] "Life of Sheridan," Vol. II., p. 392.

Highness paid a visit to Windsor, where "the Queen and another royal personage completed *what had been so skilfully begun.*"[1]

The reader will have the goodness to remember the following facts established by the foregoing narrative. 1. That Lord Grenville was sent for by the Prince, and, with many gracious expressions, entrusted with a duty for which he, as an accomplished statesman, and experienced servant of the crown, ought to have been considered fully competent to perform unassisted; Lord Grey being named as a coadjutor, as a matter of course, from their close association in politics. With them, the Prince, it appears, wanted to associate Lord Moira, a more tractable Whig;[2] but such assistance was declined—very conclusive evidence that the two Lords considered the commands they had received as being exclusively addressed to them, and wanted, and would receive no help. 2. The document required of them, after having been well studied by those able statesmen, on being forwarded to the Prince, to whom, no doubt, it was read by Sheridan, elicited a suggestion from that active and brilliant Marplot, that another composition should be written in place of it, as he disapproved of its phraseology. Another was written—of course, by him, as he, at that period, acted as the Prince's amanuensis—and at once taken by him to Lord Grey, who must have been extremely indignant at such an unwarrantable interposition. After the interview, Sheridan returned to the Prince, who, without any ceremony, threw over the responsible advisers he had sought, and adopted the irresponsible counsel he had found more agreeable.

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[1] Moore's "Life of Sheridan," Vol. II. p. 394.

[2] One of the many arrangements that did not take effect at this juncture, was to make Lord Moira Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with Sheridan as his Secretary.—Moore's Life of Sheridan, Vol. II., p. 409. But the Prince, as will be seen, had other use for him, and subsequently rewarded him with the government of India, where, as Marquis of Hastings, he acquired considerable celebrity.

3. Lords Grey and Grenville then forwarded what we cannot help considering a statesman-like remonstrance, notwithstanding Mr. Moore's opinion that "there was more in it of high spirit and dignity, than of worldly wisdom," which the Prince allows Sheridan at once to turn into ridicule, and make a source of malevolent hints and spiteful insinuations; further, his Royal Highness proceeds to exercise his personal influence with the Queen to complete "what had been so skilfully begun."

It is necessary to bear these facts in mind, because Sheridan, when he found what little reputation remained to him, assailed by the Whigs for the treacherous part he had played, addressed a letter to Lord Holland, previously "read and approved by the Prince," dated January 15th,[1] giving a very long, and apparently, a very imaginative explanation of the occurrence, differing essentially from the narrative of his biographer, who, as if to indicate the degree of authority it should possess, adds, "His political repugnance to the coalesced leaders would have been less strong, but for *the personal feelings* that mingled with it, and his anxiety that the

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[1] Moore's "Life of Sheridan," Vol. II. p. 394.

Prince *should not be dictated to by others,* was at least equalled by his vanity in showing, that he could govern him himself."[1] Such an opinion is a forcible comment on this carefully studied defence; which, notwithstanding its approval by the Prince of Wales, as endorsed by the writer, is nothing better than an elaborate sham.

A reasonable inference to be drawn from such premises, is that Mr. Perceval had engaged an effective agent to advance his purpose, and Lord Sidmouth—whose parliamentary influence he required—knowing the Prince Regent's hostility to himself, sought Sheridan as a sure avenue to the Prince's favour. By this transaction, Sheridan may have recommended himself strongly to his new friends; but henceforth he was shunned by every one of his old intimates, with whom association was an honour. To his royal master he endeavoured to make himself agreeable, by filling an obsolete office in the Court, the first fruits of which took the following form.

"AN ADDRESS TO THE PRINCE. 1811."

"In all humility we crave
Our Regent may become our slave,
And being so, we trust that he
Will thank us for our loyalty.
Then, if he'll help us to pull down
His father's dignity and Crown,
We'll make him, in some time to come,
The greatest Prince in Christendom."

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[1] Moore's "Life of Sheridan," Vol. II., p. 407.

This ribaldry was aimed at the opposition peers, and doubtless afforded intense delight to their political opponents. That, however, must have been the principal profit he derived from it. Soon after this, the once brilliant political meteor sunk in the public horizon, never to rise again. "As a man," observes a distinguished author and statesman, "his character stood confessedly low; his intemperate habits, and his pecuniary embarrassments, did not merely tend to improvident conduct, by which himself alone might be the sufferer; they involved his family in the same fate; and they also *undermined those principles of honesty* which are so seldom found to survive fallen fortunes, and hardly ever can continue the ornament and the stay of revived circumstances, when the tastes and the propensities engendered in prosperous times survive through the ungenial season of adversity."[1]

We now quote, from a well-informed authority, the progress of the intrigue:—

"The principal instrument in effecting this change in the Prince's intention, has been * * * * * one of the King's physicians. He was in the habit of waiting on the Prince from the beginning of the King's illness; and, as was at that time reported, of representing to the Prince, that the King's illness was much more alarming than it appeared in the ostensible reports made to be seen by the public. [This was true.] Of late, however, he has represented to the Prince, in the strongest manner, the probability of the King's recovery;

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[1] Lord Brougham. "Statesmen of the Time of George III."

has told him that the King *frequently makes the most anxious inquiries after him*, [this was fabulous] and has represented to the Prince that *a change of ministers* would, in all probability, as soon as it was communicated to the King, produce such an *exacerbation* (that is the very term he used) *as might put an end to his life;* and he has very strongly forced upon the Prince the reflection, that he might be considered as—or that he would in effect be—*guilty of parricide*. The Queen, too, wrote a letter to him to say that the King had been informed of all that had passed during his illness, and was in the highest degree gratified by the manner in which the Prince had conducted himself while these matters had been pending. *The Queen has not seen the King*, and, consequently, wrote only from Perceval's representation; or, rather, as *I know the Prince himself has observed*, by Perceval's dictation, the word "pending" being (*as the Prince has said*) likely enough to have escaped from a man once accustomed to the language of lawyers, but which would never have occurred to the Queen."[1]

Wilberforce makes entry in his diary on the 1st and 2nd of February: "No one knows what the Prince means to do, whether to change his ministers or not. * * * Lord Bathurst believes they are all to go out, but Perry, the Editor of the 'Morning Chronicle,' told Stephen that the Prince of Wales has examined the physicians at Carlton House, as to the state of the King's health, and has determined against changing his ministers. Otherwise, it had been decided that Lord Grenville was to be First Lord of the Treasury, in spite of his letter to Perceval. * * * I am assured," adds the diarist, "that before the Prince determined upon keeping the present ministers, he sent to Mrs. Fitzherbert and Lady Hertford, and they both advised it."[1]

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[1] "Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly," Vol. II., p. 366.

Now rumours began to be actively circulated of disagreements among the most influential leaders of the Whigs, and the popular mind was kept in a state of fermentation with statements of the impossibility of their ever being agreed in any practicable policy. The established conviction in the immediate formation of a Whig ministry, was carefully undermined ; and stronger came the assurances of the Prince's deep respect for his father's feelings, and confidence in his father's faithful servants. All speculation was at last put an end to by the publication of the following letter, which proved that the high contracting parties fully understood each other, and were resolved that no misunderstanding should henceforth arise, in the political world, as to their relative positions.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. PERCEVAL.

Carlton House, Feb. 4., 1811.

The Prince of Wales considers the moment to arrive, which calls for his decision with respect to the persons to be employed by him, in the administration of the Executive

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[1] "Life of William Wilberforce," Vol. III., p. 494.

Government of the country, according to the powers vested in him by the Bill passed by the two Houses of Parliament, and now on the point of receiving the sanction of the Great Seal. The Prince feels it incumbent upon him at this precise juncture, to communicate to Mr. Perceval his intention not to remove from their stations those whom he finds there as his Majesty's official servants. At the same time, the Prince owes it to the truth and sincerity of character, which he trusts will appear in every action of his life, in whatever situation placed, explicitly to declare that the *irresistible impulse of filial duty and affection to his beloved and afflicted father*, leads him to dread that any act of the Regent might, in the smallest degree, have the effect of interfering with the progress of the sovereign's authority. This consideration alone dictates the decision now communicated to Mr. Perceval.

"Having thus performed an act of indispensable duty, from a just sense of what is due to his own consistency and honour, the Prince has only to add, that among the many blessings to be derived from his Majesty's restoration to health, and to the personal exercise of his royal functions, it will not, in the Prince's estimation, be the least, that that most fortunate event will rescue him from a situation of unexampled embarrassment, and put an end to a state of affairs, ill calculated, he fears, to sustain the interests of the United Kingdom in this awful and perilous crisis, and most difficult to be reconciled to the genuine principles of the British Constitution."

This document unquestionably emanated from Sheridan; and in the peculiar *obliquity* of its phraseology, a keen observer may possibly trace the ministerial inspiration that might have come through such a channel as Lord Sidmouth. Be this as it may, its filial professions must be tested by a reference to the conduct of the assumed writer, when the King was in an equally pitiable state,[1] and by his extravagant rejoicings as soon as he could display the resources of his new position.[2]

The reply of the Minister to this communication, was exactly what might have been expected from him—overflowing with gratitude for such a signal mark of favour, and heaping assurances of everything having been set right by so desirable an arrangement.[3] Towards the conclusion, there is the following paragraph. "Mr. Perceval has never failed to regret the impression of your Royal Highness with regard to the provisions of the Regency Bill, which his Majesty's servants felt it to be their duty to recommend to Parliament. But he ventures to submit to your Royal Highness, that whatever difficulties the present awful crisis of the country and the world may create in the administration of the executive government, your Royal Highness will not find them in any degree increased by the temporary suspension of the exercise of those branches of the royal prerogative, which has been introduced by Parliament, in conformity to what was intended on a former similar occasion; and that whatever Ministers your Royal Highness might think proper to employ, would find in that full support and countenance which, as long as they were honoured with your Royal Highness's commands, they would feel confident they would continue to enjoy, ample and sufficient means to enable your Royal Highness effectually to maintain the great and important interests of the United Kingdom."

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[1] "Courts and Cabinets of George III." Vol. II. p. 36 and 68.

[2] See this Volume, p. 100.

[3] In Pearce's "Memoirs and Correspondence of the Marquis Wellesley," the date of this document is erroneously printed, March 31, 1812.

"The difficulties of Lord Eldon and his colleagues," says the Lord Chancellor's biographer, "were now relieved in a *very unexpected manner*."[1] Sir Archibald Alison faintly echoes Mr. Horace Twiss. "It was, therefore, matter of no small surprise to all parties, and *perhaps* to none more than to the Minister."[2]

But it is pronouncing a most humiliating judgment on Mr. Perceval as a minister, to represent him as perfectly ignorant of what was going on within a circle where he could easily have secured trustworthy informants, on a subject to him of almost vital interest. Nor is it probable that the Prince would suddenly come to a conclusion of the highest importance, in favour of an individual in Mr. Perceval's position, without having communicated with him, either directly or indirectly, and laid down something that might be accepted as an agreement. In such a crisis, it was the first impulse of each to desire to learn the inclinations of the other; and enough is known of their characters, to state with confidence, that they were not likely to remain long in ignorance of an affair in which their own interests were deeply involved. The Prince had the services of Sheridan, who was eager to negociate in opposition to the Whig leaders, against whom it is not denied he entertained very strong feelings; and the Minister had Lord Sidmouth, whose impatience to join the administration would have induced him to exert whatever influence he possessed over Sheridan, to secure its position, and forward the designs of his friend, its director and chief. Respecting the Prince Regent's determination in favour of Mr. Perceval, it has been said—"In this decision, he might probably not be uninfluenced by the consideration that, as the King's recovery appeared to be approaching, no change then made would have much likelihood of permanence."[1] It is a question whether the prospect of the King's restoration to all his faculties was sufficiently clear in the months of January and February to influence the Prince to take so remarkable a step. It was the policy of ministers to represent the state of their afflicted sovereign as much more favourable than it really was; and the Queen's sanguine temperament greatly assisted them in producing such representations. On the 6th of February her Majesty wrote to Lord Eldon, after the Prince had informed her of his intentions in favour of the present government, ardent with hopes of a complete recovery. On the 22nd, her Majesty wrote again to state her fears that his recovery was retarded, because no member of the council came to receive the report of the physicians.[2]

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[1] "Life of Lord Eldon," By Horace Twiss. Third Edit. Vol. I. p. 452.

[2] "History of Europe," Vol. IX., Chap. LXIV., p. 15.

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[1] "Life of Lord Eldon." Vol. I. p. 462.

[2] Idem. Vol. I., p. 462.

There is, however, no evidence of striking amendment in the King in February; and near the end of January—that is, previously to the Prince's letter to Mr. Perceval—his Majesty's state was not so promising. Lord Eldon, in guarded words writes to his brother, "I saw the King on Saturday [26th] for much more than an hour. He is not well, *and I fear he requires time.*"[1] It may, therefore, be allowed that the King's recovery was not sufficiently proximate when Sheridan composed that declaration for the Prince, to exert so very powerful an influence as to make him announce so important a determination. The real cause is unveiled in the secret communications that will presently be laid before the reader.

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[1] "Life of Lord Eldon." Vol. I., p. 461.

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CHAPTER II.

[1811.]

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT BY COMMISSION—THE ROYAL SPEECH—DIVISION IN THE CABINET—STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE PENINSULA—ATTEMPT TO DISUNITE LORDS GREY AND GRENVILLE—SECRET INTELLIGENCE RESPECTING THE KING—THE PRINCE REGENT AND THE GOVERNMENT—CANNING AND WHITBREAD—DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MR. PERCEVAL AND MARQUIS WELLESLEY—THE NAVAL SERVICE—SECRET INTELLIGENCE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY—THE FLEET ON THE COAST OF SICILY—THE ARMIES IN SPAIN—THE COURT AT WINDSOR, CARLTON HOUSE, KENSINGTON PALACE, AND WARWICK HOUSE—THE PRINCESS OF WALES AND THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

CHAPTER II.

On the 12th of February, Parliament was opened by Commission under the Great Seal, with a message from the Prince Regent, delivered in the House of Lords by the Lord Chancellor, wherein, after dwelling upon the " personal and filial affliction," of his Royal Highness, in being obliged to exercise the royal authority, in which he looked to be aided by " the wisdom and zeal of parliament," he entered into a warm eulogium of the services of Lord Wellington, whom, he trusted, might be assisted in accomplishing the great object of the brave nations of the Peninsula. After the usual reference to the expenditure, the message ended with a declaration that his Royal Highness hoped to be enabled to restore unimpaired to his Majesty the government of his kingdom ; and he earnestly prayed " that the Almighty may be pleased in His mercy to accelerate the termination of a calamity so deeply lamented by the whole nation, and so peculiarly afflicting to his Royal Highness himself."

The Earl of Aberdeen moved an address to the Prince Regent, and was complimented by Lord Grenville not only on the eloquence he had exhibited, but on the judgment he had evinced. Excepting that he declared his disapproval of the manner in which the war was being carried on, no opposition was expressed either by him, or by any of his party, and the address was agreed to.

In the Commons, on the same day, Mr. Milnes moved the address, which elicited only a smart comment from Sir Francis Burdett, on the cause of the Regent absenting himself on such an occasion, "Perhaps," he said, "he thought of ministers as Falstaff did of his ragamuffins —that they were such a pitiful set, he would not be seen at their head." Sir Francis moved an adjournment; but the address was carried without a division. When the report of the committee on the address was brought up the next day, severe remarks on ministers were expressed by Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Whitbread, and Sir J. Newport. None of the immediate friends of Lord Grenville, however, took part in these discussions.

The battle between the Government and the Opposition, though, to this extent, to the advantage of the former, was far from having been won. The Prince Regent still kept up his communications with his old friends, and supporters, and seemed desirous of leaving open an avenue to their occupation of office. "It was generally expected that he would still revert to his earlier friends, when the year during which the restrictions were imposed by parliament came to an end; and the opinion was confidently promulgated by those supposed to be most in the Regent's confidence, that February, 1812, would see the Whig party entirely and permanently in office."[1]

It is evident that he had objects in view which he hoped to attain with their assistance. Not the least important to him was the restoration of his brother to the post of Commander-in-chief. The opinion he expressed of the Duke of York's conduct to Mrs. Clarke in his conversation on the subject with Lord Temple,[2] may be said to have been very decided; nevertheless, he was not the less indignant against those who assisted in that lamentable exposure, and had determined, as soon as he possessed the power, to restore the Duke to the position that, in consequence, his Royal Highness had been obliged to resign. With the feelings of the Regent on this point, Mr. Perceval was well acquainted, and did not fail to recal the prominent part taken in the enquiry by some of his opponents. The Grenvilles, it so happened, were not obnoxious to censure on this point, which rendered them more dangerous as aspirants for ministerial honours; so that the troubled Minister had no resource but to endeavour to counteract the impression created in their favour by any demonstration of confidence on the part of the Prince, by filling the usual channels of political gossip with confident assurances of Whig jealousies and quarrels.

But while the dexterous politician was insinuating disunion in the camp of his opponents, there were developing the elements of discord in his own. The ministry was not entirely without able men, most of them, as statesmen, in advance of their chief. Prominent among these was the Marquis Wellesley, an efficient Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and Viscount Palmerston though a less experienced minister, was quite as competent as a Secretary at War. More than one considered himself ill-placed with inferior colleagues, or was desirous of strengthening his position by the introduction into the cabinet of some active friend. Wellesley wanted the assistance of Canning, to whom he felt under peculiar obligations; and Lord Camden, the President of the Council, was desirous of making amends to his ill-used nephew, Viscount Castlereagh; while the First Lord of the Treasury was anxious to reward his confidential friend, Lord Sidmouth. Here were opposing influences at work, sufficient to disjoint a better cemented specimen of cabinet work than Mr. Perceval's administration. There existed other influences equally antagonistic that threatened disruption. The Marquis Wellesley was pledged to Catholic Emancipation, and the Lord Chancellor Eldon with a majority of his colleagues, as firmly pledged to oppose it.

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[1] Alison. "History of Europe," Vol. IX., Chap. LXIV. p. 16.

[2] "Courts and Cabinets," Vol. IV., p. 325.

The reader will perceive in the secret correspondence about to be laid before him, how these differences affected both the Government and the Opposition. First in order of date, we must introduce the gallant admiral, who still retained the naval command that made him guardian of the coast near which our army was engaged in important operations. It may, perhaps, be necessary to remind the reader that the "George" so warmly eulogized, was the second son of his noble correspondent, more readily remembered, perhaps, as the talented Lord Nugent. He was then on his return to England, where he shortly afterwards published his poem, "Portugal."

ADMIRAL THE HON. GEORGE BERKELEY TO THE MARCHIONESS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, January 19, 1811.

I cannot describe to you, my dearest sister, how much I felt your affectionate letter to me, and what pleasure I shall experience when I know of your dear George's safe arrival. If you was able to form the contrasts which I have witnessed here, you would pride yourself upon him, as I do not think he has a fault which, of his age, cannot be ascribed to violent spirits, a very quick and piercing understanding, and an inheritance of your own fun and good humour. He has the most honourable and excellent mind I ever witnessed, and I feel sure both yourself, and my dear Lord Buckingham, will have cause to be proud of him before long. I can assure you the contrast which he exhibited with the other young men here delighted me, although I feel very acutely for some of my young friends, whose parents will rue their ever having sent them to Lisbon *to learn* anything. They are, indeed, adepts in every kind of low and destructive vice; and I know that George endeavoured, by every means in his power, to dissuade them from the road to ruin, which they were plunging in. If, therefore, you can fancy George turned Mentor, you need not fear him.

We are waiting with the greatest anxiety for the Regency events, and it is an anxiety not only caused by what may occur on your side of the water, but as for our own fate, and that of the Peninsula; as if the reinforcements have been delayed on account of the proceedings of the legislature in England, the complete ruin of all we have been doing is certain; and if they are not now on their way here and embarked, I conceive everything will be lost, whereas, if they were to arrive now, I believe Lord Wellington would end the campaign in a fortnight. At present, we are compelled to act on the defensive; and a proper degree of caution seems absolutely necessary to be observed. But as the enemy seems equally to tread that ground, and have received all the reinforcements which, I believe, can possibly be sent them, an addition on our part would turn the scale most effectually. But I think it is always the case in England, whenever we have any political squabbles, we are apt to think the machine of the whole world stops to look at, and admire the speeches made in the British parliament.[1]

Emily is writing to Lord Buckingham, and although I daresay she will inform him of many things, I do not conceive he will dislike to see this part of my letter to you, as it contains the only thing which, at present, affects our situation. We[2] are, however, endeavouring to guard against the worst, and are fortifying the left bank of the Tagus opposite Lisbon, which will close the whole defence of this metropolis. Every thing, however, begins to get very scarce, and, of course, very dear, and will be much more so, if the enemy gets possession of the Alemtejo, from whence we draw a great deal of our supplies, and especially our luxuries, all of which come from hence. However, I hope the troops will arrive from England, and then we shall terminate the business, and I shall, I trust, be able to return home, to taste a little of that society which has been so dear to me; and believe me to remain your ever affectionate brother,

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[1] The gallant Admiral expresses pretty accurately the blinding effects of the party politics of his time, which seriously affected the campaign in Portugal. The position of Lord Wellington, and his prospects, will be found carefully described in the commencement of the Twelfth Book of Napier's "History of the War in the Peninsula."

[2] The Admiral was in frequent communication with the Commander-in-chief, as may be seen by the letters of the latter to him during this and the preceding month. Under the date "Cartaxo, 9th January," Lord Wellington writes: "The plot is thickening upon us here to such a degree, that I really think we ought not to send away any more of our transports." A significant suggestion.—Despatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington. Edited by Col. Gurwood, Vol. VII., p. 124. Original Edition.

G. Berkeley.

It should be remembered that Mr. Canning had remained out of office since his quarrel with Lord Castlereagh; and though his friend, the Marquis Wellesley was a distinguished member of the administration, he had recently displayed an unmistakeable leaning towards Opposition,[1] which prepared those who looked beneath the surface, for the schism in the cabinet which eventually rendered the Foreign Secretary equally free of ministerial obligations. Possibly the failure of the Marquis to engage the services of Mr. Canning for the government, may have had something to do with the more open manifestation by the latter of Opposition sentiments at this time; but this inference may safely be left to the reader's consideration after he has obtained possession of the facts which will be laid before him in this and the following chapters.

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[1] "January 3. Manifest symptoms of Canning's rather making overtures to Opposition."—Diary of William Wilberforce, in Life, By his Sons. Vol. III. p. 491.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 21st of February, submitted to the House of Commons a statement respecting the Prince Regent's desire of economy having led his Royal Highness to decline any additional allowance for his household. A heavy draft on the Exchequer was soon afterwards called for, to enable the country to continue the struggle in Portugal; and it was at this period that the altercations between the Marquis Wellesley and Mr. Perceval, just referred to, became most prominent. Lord Grenville opposed the intended expenditure, because it was rapidly exhausting the resources of the country, the finances of which were in no condition to support so heavy and apparently so unprofitable a charge.

Great stress has been laid, by some writers, on Lord Grenville's censure of the Peninsular War; but he was very far from standing alone in his opinion; indeed, many things occurred which displayed the most culpable mismanagement—for which, however, the government was answerable rather than the general. Even that popular assembly the Common Council of the City of London, had petitioned parliament against the grant of a pension to the victor of Talavera, with severe strictures on a commander, "who has thus exhibited, with equal rashness and ostentation, nothing but a useless valour." And so desperate did some members of the government think the chances of the struggle, that the Earl of Liverpool, then Secretary at War and of the Colonies, in a despatch, absolutely proposed to Lord Wellington the propriety of evacuating the country. Nor was such an idea unfamiliar to the commander; as may be seen not only from his suggestions to Admiral Berkeley, quoted in a preceding page, but from similar expressions to other correspondents. For instance, in a letter to Mr. Henry Wellesley, respecting the muleteers, he writes, "I can only say, if something is not done, and I am to be deprived of all those persons of this description, who have, until now, been attached to this army, I shall be entirely crippled, and it will be a question *whether we ought not to quit the Peninsula entirely*."[1] On the 22nd December, 1810, he wrote to the British Minister at Lisbon: "Unless the government will act upon a more vigorous system, and raise and realize a revenue from the country, which I am convinced they may do, *the cause is gone*. It is useless to expect more money from England, as the desire of economy has overcome even the fear of the Minister; and they have gone so far as to desire me to send home the transports, in order to save money"[2] In another letter to the same correspondent, dated January 16th, he observes, "There is something very extraordinary in the nature of the people of the Peninsula. I really believe them—those of Portugal particularly—to be the most loyal and best disposed, and the most cordial haters of the French that ever existed; but there is an indolence and a want even of the power of exertion in their disposition and habits, either for their own security, that of their country, or of their allies, which baffle all our calculation and efforts. You will scarcely believe that the troops which I now have in the Alemtejo, in which province the French would find and seize resources for months, are supplied for one half their consumption by the magazines on the right of the Tagus. The people will not sell us what they have, and what they have been repeatedly told will fall into the hands of the enemy; because they will not incur the risk of being obliged, at a later period of the year, to take the trouble of sending to Lisbon to replace for their own consumption that which might now be sold to us.

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[1] Despatches, Vol. VII. p. 51.

[2] Idem., p. 64.

"In the same manner I might now collect at Elvas, from Estremadura, quantities of corn of all descriptions; but we cannot get in Alemtejo (a country untouched) carriages for its conveyance to Lisbon, because the lower orders will not work for hire, and the magistrates will not take the trouble of making them work. *Can such a people be saved?*" he demands indignantly, and in the same strain adds, "*Are they worth saving?*"[1] A little later, comes the following to Lord Liverpool, "I am sincerely desirous that the King's government would consider of the appointment of some other officer to conduct their concerns in this country, if I am to be treated in such a manner."[2]

Similar expressions occur in subsequent letters, whenever the distinguished writer became impatient of the inefficiency of the Portuguese government, or of his

[1] Despatches, Vol. VII. p. 148.

[2] Idem., p. 271.

own. The fact is, the inattention of the ministry in England to this important struggle, produced both in Spain and in Portugal, such a discouraging state of affairs, that it was almost impossible for any British statesman to hope for a satisfactory issue. A modern historian, generally an apologist for the administration, acknowledges, "In truth, even a cursory record of the campaign of 1811, must be sufficient to convince every impartial observer that a political paralysis had, to a certain extent, come to affect the British government."[1] He then calls Lords Grenville and Grey to task for being influenced by the apparently hopeless state of the contest, produced by this political paralysis—which he endeavours to excuse, on the plea that the government were always expecting their dismissal—an assertion as imaginary as the statement which follows, of a treasonable correspondence between the leaders of opposition and the enemy.[2] A fit climax to these gratuitous assumptions, may be found in the author's speculations as to the awful effects of a change of ministry at this period, in which he ignores Lord Grenville's notorious hostility to Napoleon, and leaves out of view the long-established fact, that public men, when under the responsibilities of office, rarely realize the professions promulgated in the freedom of opposition.

It is necessary to have recourse to that secret channel which, in a previous work, afforded so many piquant revelations. The writer, though he has changed his correspondent, has evidently not altered his style, it is equally clear that he is quite as confidential with the son as he had been with the father.

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[1] Alison. "History of Europe," Vol. IX., Chap. LXIV. p. 118.

[2] "History of Europe," Vol. IX., Chap. LXIV. p. 120.

——— TO EARL TEMPLE.

The news from Windsor this morning is, that the King has had a good night, and is quite calm. I am *now* told, that he was affected solely by one of those "delusions," to which he is so subject. Your Lordship well knows the nature of those "delusions;" suffice it that within these eight-and-forty hours, he said to the Duke of Sussex: "Is it not a strange thing, Adolphus, that they still refuse to let me go to Lady Pembroke (the old countess), although every one knows I am married to her; but what is worst of all, is, that infamous scoundrel, Halford (Sir Henry), was by at the marriage, and has now the effrontery to deny it to my face!"

Of the dispute I only know that it exists, but cannot, *at present,* make myself master of its details. I am, however, told that it is trifling in itself, that is, the point in dispute is trifling, but in the course it has taken, to succeed with the ministry is of "vital" importance, and that the Prince Regent "must succumb."

Although I was positively denied the knowledge of the grounds of this misunderstanding, yet immediately afterwards I learned the following curious circumstance, and which I cannot but consider as connected in some shape or other with it; of my conclusion your Lordship will be the best judge. My informant, after saying: "that it was very hard for ministers to go on with a man who had *secret advisers,*" continued, "ministers have taken the deepest offence at the Prince Regent's invariably communicating with them individually and officially, *when in writing,* through the medium of McMahon and Turner, which is indecorous to them, and quite unprecedented even in the King's practise," and, "that ministers had determined not to submit to it." Whether this be the grievance in question or not, I really cannot determine.

About a fortnight ago, an entire reconciliation took place between Lords Bathurst and Sidmouth, which was followed by a grand dinner given by the former, at which the ministers and the principal of the Doctor's friends were present. This meeting is preparatory to an arrangement which takes place on the King's reassumption, by which the Addingtons are to be recompensed for their late "steadiness and support of the King's interests." To make room for them, Lord Camden and Ryder (the latter on account of ill-health) resign, and Perceval agrees to take a Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is the present *projet,* that the Doctor shall have the Home Office, and Yorke that of the War and Colonies. Jenkinson (as usual) to be shifted to the Admiralty—(the necessity of this arises from there being a want of one Secretary of State, at least, in the House of Commons), Lord Buckinghamshire, President of the Council, and Bragg Bathurst, Chancellor of the Exchequer. This confederacy is further to be *strengthened* by the appointment of the Duke of York to the Command of the Forces; which is actually to take place! My information, *which I cannot doubt,* states, in addition, the following fact, namely: that it was the Prince Regent's wish to make this latter appointment the first act of his government, but that the Duke of York refused it, saying, that he had rather wait the re-establishment of the King's health than cloud his brother's probably short government with an unpopularity which must follow upon such a step. The King himself has fixed upon May as the period of his resuming his functions, which will also be that of the above changes. I am, however, to add that no distinct proposition has been yet made to Lord Sidmouth and his friends, although the understanding is quite perfect.

The following views of public affairs may not be uninteresting to your Lordship. The affairs of Portugal look gloomy. In the first place, the complete junction of Drouet and Mortier and their respective corps may be looked upon as certain, which will give Massena an addition of 40,000 fresh troops. The latter brings with him an immense supply of articles of the first necessity, for Massena's army: a most formidable train of artillery, and a sufficiency of pontoons, &c., for the most difficult undertaking. Thus strengthened, there cannot be a doubt but that Massena will commence operations against Lord Wellington on a grand scale, with a force of, at least, 90,000 men; nor can one contemplate the result without the deepest anxiety. I enclose your Lordship herewith a curious intercepted paper, which will show you the details of Massena's army in May last, and which could not, at the lowest calculation, amount to fewer than 75,000 muskets. In my last note but one to your Lordship, I gave you the return of our strength; since when the reinforcements sent out in February were 5,649 muskets, subject, however, to the late disastrous loss of the transport. Thus your Lordship, in every case, will see our inferiority must be great, and the event thus, at least, rendered *very* precarious. But what is far more alarming on this head, is the malcontent state of the Portuguese Regency itself, which so far from a cordial co-operation with Lord Wellington, counteracts him upon every occasion. This conduct originates partly in jealousy, partly in the devastating system to which they were always adverse, and partly to the absolute want which prevails in their treasury. This last cause has also had the worst effect in the discontent it has spread throughout the army, who are in arrear two months, and are literally starving!

Under these circumstances, it has been stated that an additional million was wanting to keep the thing going at all in Portugal, and this was the object of Charles Stewart's coming home; in vain, however, was Perceval solicited upon the subject these last six weeks; he positively refused a farthing over and above the usual grants, till yesterday, when Lord Wellesley went to council prepared upon the whole subject, and determined on breaking up, should the refusal be persisted in. He, however, succeeded, and the million was wrung from Perceval "as if it were so much of his blood," and on Friday a message will be delivered in Parliament to that effect; and on Tuesday, Lord Wellesley will support the necessity of the measure in the debate.

It appears from the foregoing, that the exact cause of complaint which had so recently elicited a remonstrance from the opposition leaders, was now exerting the same unpleasant influence upon the government. The Prince Regent, with no more regard to ceremony than to precedent, employed the minor officers of his household to communicate with his ministers, who as little approved of such indecorum as Lords Grenville and Grey had done. Probably, a recollection of their treatment caused their rivals to refrain from any formal manifestation of their disapproval of such "secret advisers."

The reconciliation of Lord Sidmouth with an influential member of the administration, may be regarded as one of those steps towards office which Lord Sidmouth was at this time cautiously taking. It is curious, as showing the value of the information which the writer affords, that in the *projet*, his lordship is named for the very office he subsequently obtained.

A glance at service afloat, will afford curious information as to how important matters affecting it, were then managed.

ADMIRAL FREMANTLE[1] TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Mahon, March 1.

My dear Lord,

You will perceive that we still remain here, and in much the same state as when I wrote last—16 sail of the line complete for sea, and the 'Montagu,' with her convoy, ready to depart, when the wind shifts to the eastward. The 'Blake' and 'Bombay' are cruising off the coast of Catalonia. The 'Invincible' still is at Carthagena, but we have not heard what progress Captain Adam has made in securing the naval stores there. This day, I conclude, will be the general exchange, which has been determined on by Cotton. Sir Richard King goes Captain of the fleet; Dundas from the 'Euryalus' to the 'Achille;' Harvey from the 'Leviathan' to the 'Royal Sovereign;' and Campbell to the 'Leviathan' from the 'Unité;' Brisbane, from the 'Belle Poule,' is also removed to the 'Cumberland.'

Sir Charles Cotton having got rid of (Neave) his captain, named a Captain Ferrier to succeed him; and, although he has not been there a fortnight, he is to go into a frigate. Had Sir Charles consulted any man who knew Ferrier, he never could have made such a selection. King, who seems pleased with the appointment, is a very good gentleman, and is desirous of going home—he neither will say a clever thing, nor a foolish one—but I must doubt whether he will be of much service to his friend. Indeed, nothing can stand lower than our chief in the estimation of us all, and the total want of energy and decision becomes more apparent every day.

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[1] Captain Fremantle had been promoted.

Of the ten frigates that were in Toulon two or three months ago, *two* only were reported there a few days since, and still nothing has been sent after them, nor are we informed in what direction they have sailed.

Pickmore hoists his flag to-morrow, or next day, in the 'Téméraire,' and I shall then be in the pleasant situation of not having a division of the fleet even. I have endeavoured to persuade Cotton to send me to Sicily, where, I conclude, there will be something to do in the summer at Messina; but having three times almost promised me, *he cannot decide,* and I am not a little annoyed at his want of determination, as well as his breach of promise.

I believe Cotton is quite aware that he is not likely to retain the command here in the event of a change of government; and I am quite sure that if any minister was to see him only one week here, he would pronounce his incapacity for governing so large a fleet.

We are all perfectly at our ease, and live well together; and if the squadron is in high order, it is to the captains and officers we are indebted; for the Commander-in-chief troubles himself very little about such matters, and does not, I believe, listen to a single person except his secretary, who deceives him. Ever your Lordship's most obliged and obedient servant,

T. F. F.

The interest of the following communication it is impossible to exaggerate. We cannot help calling attention to a passage curiously comfirming a statement put forward by Sir Samuel Romilly,[1] whose diary, however, anticipates the present revelation by more than a month. The confident representation of the King's complete recovery at an early date, so freely circulated, may now be tested. It is unquestionable that the state of the unhappy monarch afforded no real ground of hope to those who knew the character of his disorder, and the conduct of the persons who took occasion in his Majesty's sane intervals to inform him of the assumption of the royal authority by his son, was most injudicious and mischievous. In such a lamentable state of mind, no feeling is so readily acted upon as jealousy, and there can be little doubt that these imprudent communications so aggravated his disorder, as to dispel every hope that his too sanguine relatives and attendants had expressed. Instead of remaining satisfied with the prospect of resuming his functions at the end of an interval agreed upon, of some months' duration, he naturally insisted on their immediate re-assumption. Opposition of any kind was now sure of creating the most violent irritation; and, in a short time, the mania gained such head, that a cure became daily more and more remote.

——— TO EARL TEMPLE.

Monday, March 10.

So late as Saturday noon, when I left town, the "delusions" in a certain quarter continued unabated in their extent and recurrence, and either on Thursday or Friday, the King again appealed, on the old topic, to the Duke of Cambridge. Still, however, I find from the *bulletin* of Saturday, a continuation of favourable reports upon that subject. How this is to be reconciled to common sense, and common judgment, I cannot conceive; and satisfied I am, that were any one class of his Majesty's subjects aware of the simple fact I here state to your Lordship, the question would be put at rest *for ever*. Surely, in the event of a reassumption, these dates and these facts will be remembered, and find their way to the public.

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[1] See p. 30.

But what is most extraordinary in all this, is, that there is every reason for belief that this forcing upon the public the belief in *rapid* and *perfect* recovery, is not, in the present conjuncture, the particular wish of ministers: for, in fact, they are in a most awkward and unlooked for dilemma, growing out, as I conjecture, from the following causes:

As soon as it was deemed safe to inform the King of all that had occurred, during his unfitness for business, Mr. Perceval took the part of praising to him, in the most exaggerated terms, the good conduct, &c., &c., of the Prince of Wales, "his personal affection for his father, his moderation, temper, and general conduct;" and, by way of crowning the whole, "his capacity and ability for filling up the vacancy so unhappily created."

To a certain degree, all this succeeded. It tranquillized the King; was repeated, by the Queen, to the Prince, and the other members of the Royal Family, and had its effect there; and, generally speaking, made ministers popular. But I fancy all this has been a little over done, for, on Saturday, they were in a most serious embarrassment.

I mentioned to your Lordship, in my last note, that the King had fixed for May next as the period of his re-assuming his functions. In this view all parties seemed to acquiesce;

but it seems (and the determination is of the precise date with the return of the "hurries" and "delusions,") that his Majesty has thought better of it, and, since the date of my last, insisted upon his immediate re-assumption!

This was the whole of his conversation (mixed up, however, with his love affair) the latter part of last week, and is attributed, principally, to the jealousy of the Prince, infused into his mind, in no small degree, by the ministers themselves. In short, to use one of their own phrases, "he was quite furious and unmanageable upon this head, and they knew not what to do." This, I confess, is political justice, and what they are amply entitled to. Another source of the King's unmanageableness, and which they have but just found out, is the abhorrence he already begins to express about the Queen's control of his person and *disbursements*, and ministers now openly say, that the Prince was correctly just, when he said that "if any circumstance could more than another impede the King's perfect recovery, it would be that principle of the restriction system, which put him into his mother's power and disposal; and they pretend (indeed, I believe really) to regret that they did not attend to this *dictum* more seriously. Your Lordship will see that whether the Prince drew his conclusions from general or particular nature, if this fact were known, it would throw much credit upon many parts of his recent conduct.

Under these circumstances, then, namely—the impatience to govern again, and the resistance to be expected to the Queen's control, (which must be more exerted as the question of removal to town, or Weymouth, or wherever he be ordered) ministers are in woful embarrassment; and tolerably easy as they now are in their places, I am satisfied they would be perfectly reconciled to a *remote* and more *gradual* recovery, than that which the *bulletins* announce.

I know not if I have made out my case to your Lordship, or that my inferences are correct; but of the facts, whence they are drawn, I am as certain as that I exist; and I am sure your Lordship will do me the justice to say, that in the repeated communications I have thought it my duty to make you, I have never once even accidentally deceived you.

In my note, to which I have more than once referred already, I told your Lordship of a misunderstanding which subsisted between the Prince Regent, and ministers at that moment. This has ceased to exist, upon a full representation of the merits of the case from ministers. The Prince gave way, but in "a dignified and distant manner." In short, I look upon it as a most dangerous victory for them. What the grounds of it were, I never could learn, although I pressed it as far as I could with decency, to find out; but of this, at least, I am certain, that, as late as Saturday, ministers looked upon their duration of power with a despairing eye, and as entirely problematical.

The last despatches to government from Corunna, (written by Walker, who has the management of the equipment and organization of the Gallician army) state that as late as the 23rd of February, no reinforcements had arrived in North Spain from France, which, is *pro tanto,* good news.

Another communication from Admiral Fremantle, with be found to convey additional information respecting the state of some of our naval armaments at this period. We need only add that " my boy," alluded to, at the conclusion of the letter, became a distinguished naval officer, and is now an admiral.

ADMIRAL FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Rodney, Mahon, March 25.

My dear Lord,

You will probably be surprised at my dating my letter on board this ship, and from this place, whilst the squadron are at sea. The fact is, that upon Pickmore's hoisting his flag in the 'Téméraire,' I was removed from the lee division of the fleet, and the 'Ville de Paris,' did not even lead the squadron; consequently, I was not so well off as if I had been a captain, where my seniority would have, at least, given me that place; this being the case, and Burton being anxious of exchanging into a three-decked-ship, I proposed removing here, to Cotton, at the same time, offering myself for any detached service he might think me capable of, indeed anything in preference to going with the fleet fourth in command. At present, nothing better presents itself than this place, but being in a small ship of the line, I am ready for anything that offers, and the age of the other Rear Admirals, with their habits, I think, leaves me little doubt but I shall be eventually sent to the eastward, where we shall have full occupation during the summer; there are many other causes that induced me to get into an active ship, and having now been here a week, and looked at it in every way, I feel I have done right, although I have given up great comforts in leaving the 'Ville de Paris.' Your Lordship knows this is one of the small class, but she is new and sails well, and the opportunity I had of removing near to people of one sort or another, places me here very comfortably.

Cotton sailed with fourteen ships the 22nd; they were in very complete order, and only want a few men to make them perfect; indeed, there is as much good will and good sense in his fleet as any that ever were in the Mediterranean.

Everything remains as when I wrote last, and we are now procuring cattle from the coast of Barbary. I conclude, that unless some accident happens, Cotton will now remain off Toulon all the summer, as he has made arrangements for sending out water and provisions. The French ships are in readiness, and have had lately 10,000 men at Toulon, which it is said are kept in readiness to embark.

Bonaparte is endeavouring to collect a large force at Corfu, and among the vessels captured by the 'Magnificent,' one contained equipments for twenty-four sail of gun-boats; Cotton has given the command of the 'Adriatic' to his brother-in-law, Charles Rowley, and has, I hear, ordered Eyre to join the squadron off Toulon; considering the large force now employed in the Adriatic and that neighbourhood, it is a post I should like much better than being inactive here, but I must have patience and wait events. I have, with me here, only the 'Bombay' to guard the port, and if the French were in main force in Catalonia, I should have great apprehension for the island; for although it, perhaps, would not be made useful to the enemy, it would deprive us of the only port where we can refit our fleet, and still be within distance of following, should they leave Toulon. The 'St. Pablo,' of seventy-four guns, is leaving this port for Cadiz, and I have obtained a passage for Lieutenant Baker (son of Bernard's nephew) in her; the rest of the Spanish ships remain as before with only four marines and about twelve seamen in each. We have got a new governor, who remains until Grimanes, the one named by the Cortes, arrives; and all goes on tolerably quiet.

Catalonia remains much as when I wrote you last; our ships have made some small captures there and off Marseilles; had we been active during the winter, we might have annoyed their coasting trade very considerably. It will now, I conclude, be left with the two frigates and a sloop, as 'Tigre' and 'Repulse' will join the squadron off Toulon. We are waiting with great anxiety letters from England; no one here has had a line since the 24th December.

My boy is gone to cruize in the 'Ville de Paris,' as I cannot find so good a tutor anywhere as the man who is chaplain of that ship; perhaps, he is better for a time at sea than in harbour.

I beg to be remembered, with compliments, to Lady Buckingham, and all your family, and I am, my dear Lord,

Your most obliged and obedient servant,

Thomas F. Fremantle.

The contest in Spain between the French Marshals and the Spaniards, in arms against the authority of King Joseph, or rather against the designs of his imperial brother—for the King's influence with the French commanders was less even than his rule over his nominal subjects—proceeded in a manner that might have been anticipated from a knowledge of the military talent and resources on one side, and the extraordinary incapacity and presumption on the other. Lord Wellington gave the Spanish commanders and the Spanish minister the best advice; but bitter and frequent were his complaints of their neglect of, or opposition to, his counsels. The former hazarded battles when they were sure of being disgracefully beaten, or undertook sieges without the means of insuring success; and the latter passed laws, and insisted on arrangements that almost invariably benefited the enemy rather than the nation.

It is scarcely possible to imagine the impolicy and mismanagement that prevailed among the Spanish authorities, civil and military, without a detailed account—which would occupy too much space here—of the transactions at Cadiz, the seat of government, or at the head-quarters of the commanders in the various provinces in which the conflict was going on. But for what is wanting to fill up the outline given in the following communications, the reader may refer to the ordinary channels of information.[1]

—— TO EARL TEMPLE.

The following notices of the movements of French troops into the Peninsula from October 1807 to April 1811, may not be uninteresting to you; and having extracted them from original and official documents, I am satisfied they may be relied on.

1807.—On the 19th of October, French enter Spain with 47,500 infantry, cavalry, 7,120, 100 baggage waggons and carts, 94 guns, 18 mortars, and 55 howitzers.

1808.—October 11th, French grand army commence their march for Spain. In this year they poured into the country, infantry, 209,300, cavalry, 36,200, waggons and carts, 1800, and 196 pieces of ordnance of every description.

1809.—44,186 infantry, 7,122 cavalry, 434 guns—various—and 305 waggons.

1810.—124,510 infantry, 25,734 çavalry, 96 guns, 16 mortars, 3,209 waggons. 15th of August, General Drouet arrived with a ninth corps.

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[1] "Wellington Despatches," Edited by Colonel Gurwood. Vol. VII.—Napier's "History of the Peninsular War," Vol. III.—Alison's "History of Europe," Chap. LXV.

1811. Only 600 infantry, and 180 cavalry, entered Spain.

Summary of the above,[1] &c.:

Infantry	426,096
Cavalry	76,356
Carts, waggons	7,650
Waggon and car drivers	7,530
Guns	820
Howitzers	55
Mortars	34
Waggons	5,414

Grand total, 517,632 fighting men, 909 pieces of artillery, and 5,414 waggons, passed through Bayonne up to the 28th January, 1811, from 19th October, 1807.

Of the above numbers, 53,000 have re-entered France between the same periods. And they have transmitted thither 48,228 English, Spanish, and Portuguese prisoners, made by them during the war.

Such, my Lord, are the well authenticated details of the hordes of modern Gauls, who entered Spain and Portugal rather to seize upon their prey, than to contest for it. What their present situation is, your Lordship is better acquainted with than I can pretend to be; but, in a few days, I shall lay before your Lordship such information upon it as my materials will afford. A contrast greater, the page of history does not present; and it will be egregiously the fault of the present government, if their condition be not still more desperate in a very little time hence.

The following is the state of facts relative to the recent negotiations at Cadiz, for an extended command to Lord Wellington.

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[1] These figures do not accord with the preceding statement.

So soon as Massena broke up from Santarem, and that it became more than probable that the British and Portuguese armies would follow him within the Spanish frontier, Henry Wellesley, on the part of our government, made a strong and earnest request of the Regency, for the appointment of Lord Wellington to the command-in-chief of the northern and central Spanish armies, limited within the provinces of Gallicia, the Asturias, and Spanish Estramadura, founded upon the evident utility of the measure itself, and the fatal experience gained from the Talavera campaign, the disastrous results of which were solely owing to the want of such an arrangement as that now proposed. This, however, met with a decided rejection from the Regency, chiefly through the influence of Blake, the determined opponent of British interference in the Peninsula. Upon which, Henry Wellesley memorialed the Cortes, in, as I have heard, one of the ablest state papers ever put forth, and with such an effect, that it was unanimously voted that the measure should be earnestly pressed upon the Regency, as one absolutely essential to the salvation of Spain in the present crisis. When the last advices, however, came away from Cadiz, the Regency continued firm. They not only maintained their opinion, but denied the competency of the Cortes to interfere, much less to control them, in a point which the Constitution left entirely and exclusively to the executive government. Much ill blood was, of course, afloat upon this difference, and some mischief apprehended. Armstrong is, however, gone to Spain with the strongest overtures and remonstrances from our government upon the subject, and some faint hopes exist that he will be successful.

During this period, the Court may be said to have been in a somewhat disjointed state—the ordinary retinue of royalty, by various causes, having become broken up into separate sections, that had little, if any connection, with each other. In the first place, there was the Court at Windsor, where the Queen presided over an establishment provided for the care and custody of the afflicted King. Her Majesty and the Princesses had their usual attendants, and maintained their royal dignity with but little diminution in their customary state. An interesting account of their form of life has been preserved by a popular authoress, who held a minor appointment in the Queen's household some years before.[1] In the second place, there was the Court at Carlton House; which, indeed, claimed to be the Court *par excellence*; for here the principal features in the state ceremonial were preserved, and the brighter rays of royalty were concentrated. The Regent resumed the ceremonies which had ceased since the King's last seizure. Early in the year, he held his first *levée*,[2] which collected round him the whole body of expectants, popularly called courtiers.

There was another Court—it was that of the Princess of Wales, at Kensington Palace; a curious, but graphic picture of which may be found in a work that made a considerable sensation some years back.[3] Notwithstanding the equivocal position of her Royal Highness, and certain particulars respecting her conduct that had been made public, her daily associates exhibited a fair proportion of rank and talent—several, however, with other characteristics, that would have shut them out of St. James's, as long as George III. and Queen Charlotte exercised a voice in the receptions. The Princess evidently preferred gay company—a certain sprinkling of intelligence, with a good flow of animal spirits, being the ordinary passports to her society. No questions appear to have been asked of either sex; it is, therefore, not surprising that several of the favoured circle were celebrated, more or less, for their independence of moral obligations. There was Matthew Lewis, who wrote a notorious book called "The Monk," which became his prefix ever afterwards; Sir William Gell, an amateur antiquary and connoisseur, equally loose and lively; Lord Byron, then an established poet; Walter Scott, fast rising into fame as poet and novelist; Mr. Ward (Lord Dudley), the Hon. Keppel Craven, Mr. Luttrel, Viscount Melbourne, Sir Harry Englefield, and a throng of other gay men about town, were no less active in their efforts after social amusement.

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[1] Diary of Madame d'Arblay.

[2] "February 26.—Various callers this morning, until time to go to the Prince's first *levée*. The palace most splendid. An immense party. The prince looks very large. Little Michael Angelo in the room as *amicus curiæ*."—Diary of William Wilberforce, in Life, Vol. III. p. 500.

Diary of the Times of George the Fourth. 1838.

The ladies of the circle appear to have been selected to match with the gentlemen. Many were talented, and they were mostly handsome, agreeable, and good-tempered. Among them may be named Lady Caroline Lamb, Lady Oxford, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Lady Charlotte Campbell, Lady Ann Hamilton. The society, however, even of the most faulty, was not likely to injure their Royal Mistress. Unfortunately, for what reputation remained to her, her Royal Highness had associates of an infinitely lower grade, to whom she often devoted herself, with an abandonment of self-respect that equally perplexed and disgusted the ladies of her suite.[1] With such a Court as may be imagined, the pursuits of the Princess were not remarkable for dignity, were often remarkable for its violation. The Princess could sometimes behave and converse in a manner that, as one of the Court has stated, "makes me rub my eyes, and open my ears, to know if it is the same person who condescends to talk low nonsense, and sometimes even gross ribaldry."[2]

Her proceedings, as may be learnt from the same authority, frequently became as discreditable as her conversation, and kept the more prudent of her attendants in daily dread of some disgraceful discovery. And yet she was then about to commence an agitation respecting her alleged wrongs, and desired to appear before the world with all the claims of oppressed innocence and suffering virtue.

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[1] One of them thus announces and denounces the association: "About this time, her Royal Highness was introduced by a very injudicious friend of hers, to a set of low persons, totally unfitting her private society; viz: three singers, the father, mother and son; and also a number of people belonging to a school, whom her Royal Highness allowed and encouraged to treat her very disrespectfully. This at first originated in her love of ease and indolence, which is indulged by living with persons of inferior rank; but in after times, I much fear there were other reasons for submitting to such an unworthy set of people."—Diary of the Times of George IV., Vol. I. p. 72.

[2] Diary, Vol. I. p. 81.

There was still another Court, or, at least, what bore some slight resemblance to one, in the establishment of the Princess Charlotte at Warwick House. The young Princess is represented at this period as rapidly developing into womanhood, and displaying a not unattractive combination of faults and excellences. "She is grown excessively," writes one who had frequent opportunities of observing her, "and has all the fulness of a person of five-and-twenty. She is neither graceful nor elegant; yet she has a peculiar air, *et tous les prestiges de la royauté et du pouvoir.* The Princess is above the middle height, extremely spread for her age; her bosom full but finely shaped; her shoulders large, and her whole person voluptuous, but of a nature to become soon spoiled; and without much care and exercise, she will shortly lose all beauty in fat and clumsiness. Her skin is white, but not a transparent white. There is little or no shade in her face; but her features are very fine. Their expression, like that of her general demeanour, is noble. Her feet are rather small, and her hands and arms are finely moulded. She has a hesitation in her speech, amounting almost to a stammer—an additional proof, if any were wanting, of her being her father's own child; but in every thing she is his very image. Her voice is flexible, and its tones dulcet, except when she laughs—then it becomes too loud, but is never unmusical. She seems to wish to be admired more as a lovely woman than as a Queen. Yet she has quickness both of penetration and fancy, and would fain reign despotically, or I am much mistaken. I fear she is capricious, self-willed, and obstinate. I think she is kind-hearted, clever, and enthusiastic. Her faults have evidently never been checked, nor her virtues fostered."[1]

Her Royal Highness was permitted to visit her mother once a week—opportunities that were not lost sight of by the latter for effecting mischief. These communications, though guarded as far as possible, were so very injurious to the young Princess, that, when it was ascertained that the Princess of Wales was not only scheming to make her case a subject of parliamentary discussion, but was secretly concocting publications, the object of which was to traduce the Prince Regent, and represent herself a faultless victim, the Princess Charlotte was removed to Windsor, and the meetings temporarily interdicted. Although the Princess of Wales, as one who knew her intimately has admitted, possessed scarcely an atom of genuine affection for her daughter,[2] this was a grievance she immediately made the most of; and henceforth, the domestic warfare was waged with double fierceness.

The Prince Regent, as is well known, was very far from denying himself the pleasure of female society, in consequence of his separation from his consort; but it is singular that the lady with whom his name was most frequently associated, Mrs. Fitzherbert, was as remarkable for her graceful dignity and feminine virtues, as the Princess was unhappily notorious for her want of such recommendations. It has been confidently stated that a private marriage, such as more than one German Prince had had recourse to, as an approach towards sanctioning such connections, had long united them; and the friends of the Prince who were admitted to her society, invariably treated her with the respect a legitimate union would have inspired. About this time, the name of another lady appeared prominently in scandalous anecdotes of the Prince; but there was nothing in their intercourse, beyond a preference shown by his Royal Highness for the society of a clever woman of the world, who lived in the highest circle of rank and fashion. On this point, even the Princess of Wales was perfectly satisfied;[1] one of the most easy belief, when it is remembered that the lady was the mother of a son who had arrived at the mature age of thirty-three."

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[1] Diary, Vol. I., p. 65.

[2] Idem. p. 148.

The reader will presently see much political hostility directed against her, as the head of a Camarilla; it may as well, therefore, be stated here, that her town mansion was long regarded as the head-quarters of a coterie of secret advisers of the Regent, and that her husband and son were appointed to distinguished posts in his Royal Highness's household.

It may also here be the proper place to state, that notwithstanding the apparently authoritative decision pronounced by a writer of the highest eminence—himself one of the most distinguished actors in the scenes to which he refers—the estimates given in these volumes of the characters of the Prince and Princess of Wales, will be found to differ very materially from that he has laid before the public in one of his most popular works.[1] The latter estimate naturally owes much of its distinctive character to the feelings of the ablest advocate of one of the parties, and necessarily the bitterest opponent of the other—possibly, something of its high colouring may be due to a pardonable inclination to view with partiality and prejudice a cause which furnished an opportunity for the display and recognition of those extraordinary gifts that were soon afterwards rewarded with the highest honours of his profession, followed by as noble an acquisition of literary fame. It is, however, an imperative act of justice to Lord Grenville and those who shared his convictions, to put forward unquestionable facts respecting the Princess, which must deprive her of those claims to admiration which she owes to the genius of her defender. Since that estimate was pronounced, two works have been published, each of which contains evidence so unfavourable to his client, as to have exercised powerful influence on that portion of public opinion that had previously inclined in her favour. The first conveyed the personal observations of a nobleman of high character and acknowledged talent, who had the honour of escorting her Royal Highness from Germany to England, when selected to be the bride of the Prince of Wales;[1] the other conveyed the daily impressions of a lady of rank, and much literary reputation, who was one of the principal attendants of her Royal Highness after her marriage—her confidante and friend.[2] It is impossible to question the credit of their revelations; and together they carry them in an unbroken series from girlhood to the grave. Lord Brougham is very severe upon the promoters of the "Delicate Investigation" of 1806; but it is difficult to consider the evidence of disposition contained in those personal observations, without coming to the conclusion that Lord Grenville and his learned coadjutors treated the case of which they were the official adjudicators, in an extremely lenient spirit. The manner in which this royal lady will figure in the forthcoming pages, cannot but satisfy any unprejudiced mind, that where they did venture to condemn, they must have had ample grounds for their verdict.

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[1] Diary, Vol. I., p. 40.—"The Princess, in one of her confidential humours, declared she believed that Lady H—d is a woman of intact virtue."

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[1] Lord Brougham. "Historical Sketches of Statesmen who flourished n the Reign of George the Third." Second Series.

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[1] The Earl of Malmesbury. See his "Memoirs and Diary."

[2] Lady Charlotte Bury. See "Diary Illustrative of the Times of George IV."

CHAPTER III.

[1811.]

LORD WELLINGTON AND PRINCIPAL SOUZA—GENERAL GRAHAM—SERVICES OF ADMIRAL BERKELEY—MONUMENT TO CAPTAIN SHIPLEY—STATE OF SPAIN—MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE PRINCE REGENT AND MR. PERCEVAL—BATTLES IN THE PENINSULA—INFORMATION FROM LISBON—THE DUKE OF YORK RESTORED TO HIS POST OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF—GRAND FETE AT CARLTON HOUSE—ITS EXTRAVAGANCE AND FOLLY—AFFECTING ANECDOTE OF THE AGED KING—MARQUIS WELLESLEY, CANNING AND THE GRENVILLES—STATE OF THE GOVERNMENT.

CHAPTER III.

The month of April passed without any particular variation in the relative positions of the Government and the Opposition. Parliament was for the most part employed in passing extraordinary grants, among which the Marquis Wellesley secured another £100,000 for the Portuguese. But the intriguing spirit of some members of the administration was certainly not inactive.

Among the inefficient officials in the government of Portugal, at this period, was Principal Souza, who amused himself, and displayed his malignity, by writing offensive anonymous letters to the Commander of the English army, and giving him every possible opposition and annoyance. He had a colleague in these disgraceful transactions, in a Portuguese prelate. Notices of these worthies occur in Lord Wellington's Correspondence, as early as the beginning of March.[1]

Towards the end of the following communication there is a reference to an able speech made by Lord George Grenville, on the 26th of April, on Mr. Perceval's motion of thanks to Lord Wellington for his successful defence of Portugal. The conduct of the government towards Admiral Berkeley, there also referred to, appears to have been influenced by the Admiral's connection with the Grenville party.

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[1] "Despatches," Edited by Colonel Gurwood, Vol. VII., p. 331.

——— TO EARL TEMPLE.

May 2, 1811.

In reference to the papers I sent yesterday to your Lordship, I have to add, that Lord Wellington's two narratives are entirely private, and were transmitted hither for the use of his individual friends, nor have they been seen by any minister save his brother. I am sorry to say that the answer from the Prince Regent[1] to his letter containing the best founded charges against Principal Souza, has been, to a great degree, unsuccessful; that potentate positively negativing his dismissal, unless Mr. Stuart was removed also from the Regency. This, of course, was refused, and matters in regard to that gentleman remain in *statu quo.* But although the Prince Regent was thus positive respecting Souza, his reply was couched in terms the most gratifying to the feelings of Lord Wellington. Although he complained that Mr. Stuart had often treated him with too little respect, from Lord Wellington everything was the reverse, and that he considered himself indebted to him for everything he possessed, or was likely to possess in this world, and that his services were far above all reward. He proposed, however, at the end of this campaign to confer upon him the order of Christ (the highest in Portugal), with the title of Duke and

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[1] Of Portugal.

Grandee of the first class, to support which, he meant to annex lands producing, in Portugal, to the value of £3,000 annually, and in Brazil to £2,000, free of all tax, in perpetuity to him and his descendants. What Lord Wellington will determine upon this proposition is not known here, but his friends have strenuously advised him to accept it.

I do not know whether your Lordship has heard that the Spanish Governor offered to make Graham a Duke, with the title of *Serra del Porco,* with an appanage of £3,000 per annum, but which he refused, stating, however, that he should be highly (and sufficiently) gratified if the Cortes passed a vote of thanks to him for his conduct at Barrosa.

The following fact is worth notice: Lord Wellington, as Commander-in-Chief in the Peninsula, reported to Lord Liverpool General Graham's action, and gave it, and him applause in terms that would do honour to all parties, but which the noble Secretary has not thought proper to publish, notwithstanding Lord Wellesley's request so to do.

Another point connected with the late proceedings on the continent, will come more within your Lordship's interests. When the relief of Portugal was no longer problematical, and that there was question of thanks to the army, &c., Lord Wellesley wrote a note to Mr. Perceval, in which he forcibly urged the strong claims of Admiral Berkeley and the navy to a similar distinction, and pressed it upon the Minister as a common act of justice, more particularly as Lord Wellington, had more than once mentioned the co-operation of Admiral Berkeley in the most marked terms in his dispatches; and that, although the nature of the service did not allow of the navy latterly distinguishing itself, yet, that so long as the defensive operations of Lord Wellington were carried on (on which everything hinged), it shewed itself a most powerful and efficient arm of the expedition. This note, however, as your lordship has seen, has totally failed, to the no small indignation of the writer. I am not myself at all a judge of the fitness or the contrary of this proposition; but I most sincerely regret that it was not carried into effect, as I know how much it would have gratified the Admiral.

I cannot tell your Lordship how highly Lord George Grenville's speech upon the motion for thanks has been praised, and how gratifying it has proved to the friends of Lord Wellington. It is allowed upon all hands, that it was not only excellent in itself, but there was the greatest ingenuity in giving the subject a totally new turn, when most every topic connected with it had been exhausted by those who preceded him in the debate.

From the Peninsula, any intelligence at this period was received in England with the deepest interest; and the Marquis of Buckingham had now two correspondents in that quarter, high in naval command, who had favourable opportunities of learning the true state of the conflict. The first letter communicates some interesting intelligence respecting one of the many gallant men whose career was there cut short.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, May 4, 1811.

My dear Lord,

In a tour of examination, on the banks of the Tagus, I was surprised to stumble upon the burial place of poor gallant Captain Shipley; and having made some enquiry about it, I find that a Portuguese gentleman has busied himself about it, but did not know to whom to apply, in England, for orders. It seems that when Sir C. Cotton was here, a subscription was agreed upon, to erect a monument for him in the British burial ground. And, in fact, the monument was ordered, but no inscription; and this Mr. Utarro wished to write to his friends for one, as also to know whether it should be erected on the spot where the French buried him, and where the proprietor of the land has planted a few trees round it; or whether the remains should be placed in the English cemetery. As I know the interest which you took in his family, I said I would apply to you, as possibly some directions may be given by his family. The spot is directly opposite to where the corvette anchored, in boarding of which he most unfortunately fell, and the enemy have made a sort of rough monument over him.

Although we are in hourly expectation of some news, both from Lord Wellington's army, and Marshal Beresford's; as yet nothing decisive has transpired either as to Almeida or Badajoz. The enemy are endeavouring to steal away in the night, in small bodies from the first; and we intercepted fourteen men and an officer who attempted it; so that I imagine a few days will put us in possession. The siege of Badajoz is commenced; and unless Soult or Mortier can relieve it, it must fall. But the intercepted despatches give such an account of the state of dissatisfaction of the French army, that I do not believe they will hazard a battle to do so. Mortier, Ney, and Massena, are said to be going to Paris, and that Soult will be left in command. He is their best general; but he fears the activity of Lord Wellington so much, that I conceive he will not hazard anything against him, as he is convinced what the British troops are capable of, and to what perfection they have brought their allies; and he will not easily forget the lesson taught him at Oporto. We have nearly finished the works on the south side of the Tagus, so that Lisbon is now completely surrounded by lines of defence, if Bonaparte should try his luck again with an increased force.

I am fearful the intrigues and follies of the Spaniards will do more to subjugate Spain, than the enemy's arms. The people begin to be tired of eternal war, and the treachery or imbecility of their rulers; and are ready for any regular government, which will ensure them peace. The internal state of the country, however, is such, that tranquillity will not be restored, at any rate, for some time. The bands of Guerillas will be formidable hordes of robbers; and the life of plunder which they have enjoyed for some time, will not be easily relinquished.[1] Our weather is beginning to wax warm; but the winds have been so constant to the westward, that we have four mails due from England; and this is the second week I have been obliged to send a vessel of war with the despatches, for want of a packet. Pray remember us all most kindly to all yours, and believe me to remain ever yours, most sincerely and affectionately,

G. Berkeley.

May 5.

Massena has collected all that is left of his army, and taken position to defend Ciudad Rodrigo, which he conceives Lord Wellington may attack; and it is probable he may try to relieve the garrison at Almeida. But our army is so posted, and in such good condition, that any attack upon it will certainly be fatal to him.

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[1] Compare this with Lord Wellington's letters to the Earl of Liverpool, May 1, and Mr. Charles Stuart, April 30.—Despatches, Vol. vii., p. 513—517. See also, Napier, History of the Peninsular War, Vol. iii. p. 217.

It appears from the following note, that the alliance which had been formed with so much difficulty, was threatened with disruption. Indeed, the position of the Government was daily becoming more embarrassing.

——— TO EARL TEMPLE.

Your Lordship may be assured that the King is very ill this day, and has been so since the day before yesterday (Saturday) in the evening, when the "wanderings and hurries" of mind came on, and have been since increasing to the latest accounts, which arrived about an hour ago (four in the afternoon of this day). The physicians affect not to be alarmed, but to *my knowledge* the ministers are terribly so, when this circumstance is also coupled with that of a *serious misunderstanding* between the Prince Regent and Mr. Perceval, which has risen to such a height that one or other *must* give way. I have not been able to ascertain the cause of this rupture, but the fact is indisputable. I shall write to your Lordship to-morrow more fully, but thought what I have mentioned too important to be withheld a moment; at least, so it appears to me.

The intelligence from the Peninsula now engrossed the attention of the country, and afforded the ministers something like a sense of security in their position.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, May 12, 1811.

MY DEAR LORD,

At length, I believe, the parting blow is given, and you will probably see in the Gazette a fresh record of the decided superiority of British troops. Massena has been reinforced by Bessières with the Imperial Guard, by forced marches from Madrid, which not only re-established his superiority in cavalry, but gave him an addition of some infantry, which made him strong enough to attempt either to relieve Almeida by driving us back, or to attack with a view to a decisive victory. After collecting the whole of his force at Ciudad Rodrigo, he pressed forward, and from the second to the fifth instant, repeated skirmishes took place between the advanced posts, in which they were invariably repulsed; on the fifth, a general attack was made, the brunt of which fell upon our right and centre, which they endeavoured to break by repeated attacks of heavy columns of infantry, and large bodies of cavalry, which masked their artillery.

This is the account given by George, whose division formed the right, a part of which (the Chasseurs Britanniques and Brunswick Oels Corps) fought, and it will give your royal neighbours in Buckinghamshire much satisfaction to know, that the remnant of the royal army of France distinguished itself most particularly; the Brunswickers were rather suspected, but wiped away everything by their conduct. The result of this glorious day, was the keeping possession of our ground with 6,000 of the enemy's army *minus*; and they were driven back to the other side of the River Agueda, where they halted for a day, and then, instead of renewing the attack, as was expected, they retreated again to Ciudad Rodrigo.[1]

I have not as yet seen the official despatches, and, therefore, give you this from George's as well as other private letters. Our loss is between 1,400 and 1,500. Edward Harvey has had a slight wound, but nothing of any consequence; if Louisa sees you before she receives any other account, you may tell her. That unfortunate fellow, Hervey (Mrs. Fremantle's son) has again been wounded in the leg, and I fear severely, but not so as to occasion the least fear of his life. I imagine that the garrison of Almeida seeing this attempt to relieve them prove abortive, will instantly surrender, and we shall see what their next march will be. I conceive, if things are as represented in the English papers, in Holland, and to the North, that they will evacuate the Peninsula, as matters are going on worse with them to the south, and Soult is fortifying himself near Seville, by turning two convents particularly well adapted by their position, into fortresses.

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[1] See "Wellington Despatches," Vol. VII. p. 528. Napier, Vol. III. p. 303.

I have now, my dear Lord, to ask your advice and perhaps your assistance; but as I know so little of the politics of the moment, I trust you will act as seems best. There certainly will be a *brevet*, and probably all the commanding field officers of the regiments, in this affair of the Agueda, will be promoted. My dear boy, by being on the staff, and his regiment not there, will, I fear, not be included, unless great interest is used for him. I have wrote to Bathurst to forward this on *the ministerial* side, and I have no doubt the Duke of Richmond will second him; but as the Prince does not lend a willing ear perhaps to solicitations from that side, he may possibly extend this favour to George, if other persons apply also for the same. George will be sadly off, if all these majors are made lieutenant-colonels over his head, and as I believe his general (Houston of the 7th division of the army), will bear testimony to his conduct, I conceive as he has served his proper time, he might be included in any brevet which may come forth.

We expect every hour to hear of the fall of Badajoz, and as I have a brigade of seamen employed there, I hope to see them mentioned as useful. We have mounted our heavy flat boats upon carriages constructed on purpose, and moved them by land from the Tagus to the Guadiana, a journey of twenty leagues, and when their services are no longer wanted, I shall move them down the Guadiana to its *embouchure,* by which means, I shall not only obtain a good survey of the river, but get my boats back with less damage and expense. I have detached my troop frigates off the Mondego to receive the wounded and prisoners, down the river from Coimbra, and I am now left with only my flag ship and one of the line. But have two still cruizing for the frigates, which attempted to relieve the island of Mauritius, which having fallen, may be expected back, and I hope the son of my dear old friend, Leveson Gower, may be fortunate enough to cross upon them. You may imagine, my dear Emily is not a little rejoiced that George has escaped, although in every battle which Lord Wellington has fought, who, I am proud to say, gives him much credit at Oporto, as well as Talavera and Busaco; General Paget may possibly say more if necessary, as he was with him when he lost his arm at Oporto. God bless you, my dear Lord, and believe me ever yours,

Most sincerely and affectionately,

G. BERKELEY.

In a letter from Lord Wellington to Vice-Admiral the Hon. George Berkeley, dated "Elvas, May 20," commenting on the action noticed in the following letter, he says, with that fine feeling for professional merit which he invariably exhibited, whether in a friend, or in an enemy, "You will have heard of the Marshal's action on the 16th. The fighting was desperate, and the loss of the British has been very severe; but adverting to the nature of the contest, and the manner in which they held their ground against all the efforts the whole French army could make against them, notwithstanding all the losses which they had sustained, *I think this action one of the most glorious and honourable to the character of the troops, of any that has been fought during the war.*"[1] Again, in a letter to the Earl of Liverpool, he writes, "I beg to draw your Lordship's attention to the *ability, the firmness, and the gallantry*, manifested by Marshal Sir William Beresford, throughout the transactions in which he has written."[2]

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, May 19, 1811.

MY DEAR LORD,

Just as the Packet was sailing *without* any fresh news, a telegraph announced a severe battle between Marshal Beresford and Soult, who had left Seville with a strong force, to raise the siege of Badajoz, which was near surrendering, as two breaches had been made. This object he in part has succeeded in, as Beresford was obliged to collect his army to oppose him; and on the 16th, he was attacked by Soult, at Albuera, three leagues from Badajoz. The battle lasted six hours, and we gained the victory, but with a severe loss. The particulars are not come in as yet; and, of course, as the official accounts must be sent round to Lord Wellington, this will occupy some days before it can reach this place. The officers which follow are known to have suffered.

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[1] Despatches, Vol. VII., p. 576.

[2] Marshal Sir William Beresford's account of the battle is given in a letter to Lord Wellington, at p. 588.

General Houghton, killed.
General Stewart (Galloway), } wounded slightly.
General Cole,
Sir N. Myers, dead of wounds.
Col. Duckworth, killed.
Col. Collins, lost a leg.

The Gazette will give you the account of Almeida, which was evacuated and blown up. The greatest part of the garrison escaped by the neglect of that part of the army which invested it. A great number of prisoners, and many killed; that I do not believe, upon the whole, that a third did escape. Marmont commands the French army, and Massena is gone to Paris. Lord Wellington is gone with two divisions to join Beresford; and I imagine the siege of Badajoz will commence again. The Spaniards in Beresford's affair behaved remarkably well, which convinces me the affair of Barossa was the fault of the General and officers. The Packet is under weigh, therefore I must conclude, ever your most sincerely and affectionately,

G. Berkeley.

The contest going on in some of the Spanish provinces, where the French Marshals, Suchet and Macdonald had obtained important successes over the patriotic forces, now began to divide public attention with the proceedings of Wellington and his subordinate officers. In consequence of excessive barbarity on the part of the French commanders, exciting a cruel retaliation from the Spaniards, the war raged with a ferocity unworthy of Christian nations. In the excesses committed by both, the English did not in any way participate. Indeed, with the exception of a force of two thousand men, subsequently despatched from Cadiz under Colonel Skerret, to assist the garrison of Tarragona, when closely besieged by Suchet, too late to prevent its capture, and one or two similar demonstrations, they had very little to do with Spanish military movements. Lord Wellington's remonstrances and complaints respecting them were as frequent as they were unavailing. Indeed, many a severe moral lesson had to be taught these stubborn pupils before they would place the necessary confidence in their instructor.

ADMIRAL FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

The state of Catalonia at present is rather singular. After the taking of Figueras, the French attempted to retake it; and the Marquis of Campo Verde, with a body of 10,000 men, left Tarragona to raise the siege, when the French, with 10,000 men assembled near Tarragona, in the road between the army of Campo Verde and Tarragona; so that at this moment, the last named place is besieged, and Campo Verde, finding himself unequal to meet the French in the field, has by sea got in himself and about 3000 men into that fortress. In the meantime, the French are embarking the heavy artillery at Tortoza, for the siege of Tarragona, thus turning the guns of one place against the other. I hear the 'Blake' and a frigate are at anchor there, and protect the Mole, &c. &c. 21st May. I have been very busy these last days, sending supplies to Tarragona, which is certainly the high road to this island. The 15th, I got letters from thence, and I have been enabled to send 'Bombay' with 350 Walloons, and the 'Bustard' with two transports containing ordnance stores and provisions; this, with two transports, and a sloop from Gibraltar, and also a reinforcement from Valentia, will, I am in hopes, enable Campo Verde to hold out, as it is very strong indeed. Campo Verde is quite unequal to the situation; and his successor, the Duke of Infantado, not much better. The want of character and energy on the part of the Spanish officers, is quite distressing to an Englishman. If Tarragona falls, the situation of these islands must occupy the attention of government—no troops here but a part of the Walloons, most of whom are French prisoners; and the temptation of eight sail of the line, with such a quantity of naval stores, and fourteen transports fully laden with provisions, cannot but fail drawing the attention of so active an enemy, who have positively no means of defence; nor do I believe, independent of the English, are there two hundred people who would walk a mile to oppose the French. I have fully stated this to Mr. Wellesley, but by all I see, I am afraid he has not influence enough to prevent all that must happen in the event of Tarragona's falling.

Campo Verde succeeded in getting reinforcements into Figueras, which may now be considered secure for eight or nine months.[1] If I go eastward, which is not improbable, I shall probably be enabled to get a larger animal than the one I send you, [a mule] which, however, is very perfect, as it goes as well as a horse, not sullen, and very bony. I beg my best regards to all your family, and beg you will believe me always,

My dear Lord,
Your most affectionate and faithful servant,
THOMAS F. FREMANTLE.

Wellington had assumed the offensive on the frontiers of Portugal, and from this time a decided change manifested itself in the progress of the war, which, notwithstanding the immense numerical superiority of the French force in the Peninsula, and the dominant position they had secured in the fairest provinces of Spain, took such a turn in favour of the cautious and skilful commander of the English and Portuguese armies, that the Government at home began to rouse themselves out of the criminal apathy with which they had for some time been content to regard the unpromising aspect of the contest, and forwarded assistance on a liberal scale. A modern historian[1] is as severe in his censure of this tardy support, as he is unnecessarily so, on the opposition which the mismanagement of the war had created; but satisfies his judgment by attributing the remissness of ministers to their sense of the insecurity of their tenure of office—an unworthy excuse, and by no means a trustworthy one. Lord Wellington's opinion of the Government was sometimes expressed with very little reservation;[2] but a timid policy was now giving way to a decisive one; and the much-tried commander began to be better satisfied with his superiors.

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[1] See Napier, Vol. III., p. 237.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, June 7, 1811.

My dear Lord,

I have delayed writing for some days, in constant expectation of the fall of Badajoz; but whether the commander, whose name is Phillipon, and seems to be a very clever officer, thinks that he shall again be relieved by his friends, or that he wishes to make a grand mausoleum for himself in the ruins of the town, I don't know; but it still holds out, and the hot weather is coming on, which is to be dreaded in its effects on our army. It is said that Marmont has detached a large corps to join Soult, and possibly that General may attempt a second time to raise the siege; but as Lord Wellington has provided a reception for him, I hardly think he will risk it, as a second defeat will nearly annihilate the enemy's army in this part of the Peninsula.

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[1] Alison. "History of Europe," Chap. LXVI.

[2] "What can be expected of men," he asks of Admiral Berkeley, "who are beaten three times a-week in the House of Commons?"—Despatches, Vol. VI., p. 21.

The army to the North, that is, Marmont's, is in very small force at Salamanca and Ciudad Rodrigo, and, of course, we have left a sufficient corps to watch it. The militia of the country are all returned to their work to cultivate the vineyards and grain; but are ready to assemble at the shortest notice. The militia to the southward are still with the army, and are a most useful body of men, and, in fact, are now as good as their regulars.

I imagine if Badajoz falls, our army will push on to the high grounds of Spain, towards the Sierra Morena or Seville, in order to avoid the pestilential effects of the low lands near the river in summer, which create the miasma or marsh fever, which differs a little from our ague. Our troops are now in the greatest health, and in every point of view are certainly the best in the world: the campaigns in Portugal having taught them every sort of duty. The rifle corps, at the siege, bury themselves in the sand during the night, close to the ramparts, and not an artillery-man can appear at the guns of the fort, but is picked off directly. The only part of our army to whom the art of real war appears new, is the cavalry, whose peaceable campaigns in country quarters in

England, and whose Tom Fools of colonels, with their muff caps and whiskers have completely ruined them as effective troops; their horses have been so pampered and hurt in body-cloaks, that until they are a little seasoned, they are good for nothing. However, they are now getting on fast in perfection, and the natural spirit of the man and beast is such, that they will be very soon on a par with the German Hussars, who certainly are the best troops in the world for service, and have one principle, which, I fear, never will be instilled into ours, namely: that every man takes care of his horse's comfort and food, before he thinks of providing for himself.

June 8.

Intercepted letters from the Governor of Badajoz to Soult, state his inability of holding out, if he is not reinforced or relieved, and that we have endeavoured to storm, but have been repulsed—which latter is, I believe, true, as the Spaniards tried it, and lost about fifty men. The governor seems a very active and determined fellow: but he must surrender. The packet is now going, and I must conclude—ever your's,

Most sincerely and affectionately,
G. Berkeley.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, June 13, 1811.

My dear Lord,

In my last, I wrote that the siege of Badajoz was carrying on, and that hopes were entertained of its soon falling. But the prospect of relief, and the quantity of heavy ordnance which the French had taken from Olivenza and Campo Verde, has enabled them to hold out, and even repulse two attacks on the breach of St. Christoval, the taking of which would have given us the place. In the mean time, Soult has called in from every quarter the dribblets of regiments, and two from Cadiz; and Marmont, having detached Drouet with five thousand men, for to make up his army, he was joined by them on the tenth at Llerenha, and has begun his march; and of course Lord Wellington is compelled to raise the siege again (leaving, however, a corps to blockade it), and march towards him, in order to give him battle, while the combined armies are in superior force to the enemy, and every day is now looked for with anxiety for the result, as it will be final, if Soult's army is beat, for he has no chance of any other reinforcement. In the mean time, they are aware at Cadiz, how much the besieging army before it is weakened by these drafts, and are preparing to attack them; so that from thence you may expect to hear of something also. Marmont, with the army of the North at Ciudad Rodrigo, is marching by Coria and Plasencia, to join Soult, and the attack will probably be again attempted upon Portugal from thence, if Lord Wellington does not defeat him before Marmont joins him. The enemy previous, or, perchance, at the same moment, made a false attack from Ciudad Rodrigo, with all their cavalry, and about five thousand infantry, which is all they have left there. Sir B. Spencer, who commands, having detached the first division to the south, to counteract Soult's reinforcement, fell back upon the Coa, where the enemy's cavalry cannot act, and there remains; and I dare say will move to the south, with all the British and regulars of the Portuguese, leaving that frontier to be watched by the militia and Spaniards.

This is our present situation; and although it is an anxious moment, I conceive the result will turn out most favourably; and I hope, before I close this letter, to add some particulars, which we may learn by telegraph sooner than the Despatches can reach us.

G. BERKELEY.

June 15, 1811.

Nothing new; but every account by telegraph gives us preparatory notice of what may be expected. Soult has been joined by Drouet, and has advanced to Los Santos. Marmont is on his way from the north, and we have only one division with the Portuguese militia, left to the northward, all on their march, and have nearly joined, by this time, the army near Badajoz. The 11th Light Dragoons, in perfect order, have arrived to-day, which will add most considerably to the sort of force most wanted. I conceive a few days will terminate our anxiety.

G. B.

The following communication has neither signature nor address, and as it is marked "copy," the handwriting affords no clue to the original writer. He was probably Mr. T. Sydenham.

Lisbon, June 8, 1811.

As soon as I communicated my arrival to Mr. Stuart,[1] he called upon me, and invited me to live with him; and when I told him that Lord C. Manners was with me, he immediately extended the invitation to him. We are, therefore, completely lodged with Mr. Stuart in the large house at Buenos Ayres, built by the great Marquis de Pombal. Stuart's family consists of Hamilton, Desbrow, and Croft. He lives in excellent style, and there is the most perfect freedom and ease in the house.

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[1] Mr. Charles Stuart, His Majesty's Minister at Lisbon, afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothsay.

Stuart has received me just in the manner that I could have wished. He converses openly and fully upon every subject, and has given me access to all his papers, both private and public.

I confess I am quite delighted with him; he is plain, unaffected, full of information, very unreserved, and does his business with surprising facility and promptitude. I am reading all his miscellaneous correspondence for the last year, and am procuring all the information I can, to prepare myself for my business with Lord Wellington.

My arrival at Lisbon was announced to his Lordship by telegraph; and the answer was received in the course of the same evening. I afterwards wrote a letter to his Lordship, and sent it to him with the despatches and letters I thought he might wish to receive immediately. The packet was sent by one of Stuart's couriers, and will reach the army this evening.

I do not exactly know when I shall be well enough to leave Lisbon, but I shall not remain here a moment longer than is absolutely necessary. In the meantime, I shall be usefully employed in gaining information of the state of affairs in Portugal and Spain; and I am convinced that I shall require all this information to enable me to do my business effectually with Lord Wellington, especially upon those points that are immediately connected with our views and interests in the Peninsula.

Long before this letter can reach you, the accounts of an operation in Guadiana and at Badajoz will have reached England. The battle of Albuera appears to have been one of the most sanguinary and hard fought contests that we have had with the French. The Spaniards behaved well; that is, they fought with great steadiness and bravery; but the impossibility of moving and manœuvring them in action, threw the great brunt of the action on the British infantry, and made our loss considerable.

As usual, the rascals at Cadiz have attributed the whole honour of the victory to the Spaniards. From all the estimates I have seen, I compute the strength of Soult to have been from 26,000 to 28,000 men; and of that number there can be little doubt that at least 9000 have been placed "hors de combat." Beresford, I take it, must have had about sixteen thousand men, besides the Spaniards. The result of the battle has occasioned a great sensation, both in Portugal and Spain, and the French do everything in their power to conceal it from their troops in the north of Spain.

The operations against Badajoz are continued with the greatest activity, and I trust that a few days will put us in possession of it.

It may be interesting to you to know the points to which I am at present directing my attention.

First. The question regarding Principal Souza, and though there are some serious difficulties, I really think the matter may be sufficiently accommodated to reconcile all parties for the present, and to enable us to carry on the great cause against France.

Second. The removal of the Prince of Brazils to the Azores, and the possibility of his coming on to Lisbon.

Third. The equipment of the Portuguese army, including its pay, commissariat, arsenals and hospitals. This subject is more extensive and important than I imagined, when I left London. In fact, it involves the means of defending Portugal, and the salvation of the country, and, of course the success of the general cause in the Peninsula. I am likewise endeavouring to procure statements of the French and Spanish armies, and of the number and distribution of the Guerillas. I hope to furnish Lord Wellesley with some statements upon these last subjects, before I leave Lisbon.

In the meantime, affairs were going on much in the old way at home. The Prince Regent had caused his brother to resume his post of Commander-in-chief May 23) but was daily becoming less satisfied with his ministers, and they were daily becoming less satisfied with each other.

Lord Temple now opens a little fresh light upon the state of parties. He commences by referring to a negotiation in which Lord Yarmouth had been engaged; and soon afterwards refers to Lord Milton's motion in the House of Commons (June 4) reflecting on the reappointment of the Duke of York.

The question was not whether I should agree to the *replacing* the Duke of York, but was I prepared to carry my principles on, and to decline belonging to any Administration which permitted the Duke of York to continue Commander-in-chief? I immediately asked him what his feelings were, and what he believed Lord Grenville's were upon this point. He declared that he did not believe Lord Grenville was prepared to break off a negotiation upon that point; that he saw many reasons why it was improbable any successful arrangement of government under the present circumstances could be formed, but he did not believe that any individual was prepared to decline serving the Prince because the Duke of York was Commander-in-chief. I could not then help feeling that unless I was prepared to say that I would not take office with the Duke of York, my objecting now to his appointment would be childish. I certainly do not feel prepared to go that length, especially as I find my uncles equally unprepared. Then, were I to accept office under those circumstances, I should place myself under the imputation of standing by my consistency when only in opposition, and sacrificing it for the sake of office. This had much weight with me, and as I was determined to take no step directly militating against your feelings during your absence, without having the opportunity of discussing and talking over the matter with you, I determined very unwillingly to stay away, as being the line which relieved me the easiest from the many embarrassments with which I found myself surrounded. I have the satisfaction to find that my resolution not only meets with the entire approbation of my uncle, but of all those whose good opinion I most value. All your members, except George, who voted with Milton, staid away, and the division will show you a list of names in which, with very few exceptions, indeed, I should have deeply regretted finding myself included.

The King is certainly very ill, and was, I believe, worse yesterday. The dropsical symptoms are derided by the Court, but I am convinced, do not the less exist. The *fête*[1] is still, as they say, to come on, but I doubt it. The tone from Portugal is low. Another battle is expected with Soult, and the letters from head-quarters which I have seen, especially those from Lord Wellington's confidential friends, are far from cheering. Badajoz is stated as not likely to fall, and the universal opinion seems to be, that the waste of British lives is more than we can support, and that the contest will terminate unfavourably to us, because of the positive want of means to carry it on. We lost four stand of colours at Albuera; and colours, cannon and prisoners are enough to enable the French to claim the victory.

The *fête* mentioned by Lord Temple, was a ball and banquet, given at Carlton Palace, on the 19th of June, at which several members of the royal families of France and

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[1] At Carlton House.

England, and some three thousand of the nobility and gentry were entertained, in a style of unexampled magnificence, by the Prince Regent. According to a description then published:

"The room at the bottom of the stair-case represented a bower with a grotto, lined with a profusion of shrubs and flowers. The grand table extended the whole length of the conservatory, and across Carlton House to the length of two hundred feet. Along the centre of the table, about six inches above the surface, a canal of pure water continued flowing from a silver fountain, beautifully constructed at the head of the table. Its banks were covered with green moss and aquatic flowers; gold and silver fish swam and sported through the bubbling current, which produced a pleasing murmur where it fell, and formed a cascade at the outlet. At the head of the table, above the fountain, sat his Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, on a plain mahogany chair with a feather back. The most particular friends of the Prince were arranged on each side. They were attended by sixty *servitors;* seven waited on the Prince, besides six of the King's and six of the Queen's footmen, in their state liveries, *with one man in a complete suit of ancient armour.* At the back of the Prince's seat appeared aureola tables, covered with crimson drapery, constructed to exhibit, with the greatest effect, a profusion of the most exquisitely wrought silver-gilt plate, consisting of fountains, tripods, épergnes, dishes, and other ornaments. Above the whole of the superb display, appeared *a Royal Crown, and his Majesty's cypher,* *G.R., splendidly illumined.* Behind the Prince's chair, was most skilfully disposed a side-board, covered with gold vases, urns, massy salvers, and the whole ornamented by a Spanish urn, *taken from on board the Invincible Armada.*"[1]

Was this last addition introduced out of compliment to one of the guests—the Spanish ambassador, *pour encourager les autres?* It was, at least, like other singular features in this scene of extravagance, in very questionable taste; but the spirit of the whole thing was condemned by the subjects of the afflicted king, who was made its ostensible cause, and notwithstanding that "the company comprised all the members of administration, the foreign ambassadors, the principal nobility and gentry in town, the most distinguished military and naval officers, the Lord and Lady Mayoress, and the principal aldermen and magistrates," who did not leave off their unseasonable feasting and dancing till six o'clock in the morning, there were still left in the kingdom many persons, who bitterly compared the Prince's professions of filial devotion on accepting the Regency only a few months back, with this ill-timed display of regal magnificence and prodigal rejoicing.

Sir Samuel Romilly, who was present, says, "The great expense of this entertainment has been contrasted with the misery of the starving weavers of Lancashire and Glasgow."[2] It, however, abounded with incongruities, among which, a feast in compliment to a sovereign, and a parent, then suffering under the most pitiable affliction to which human nature could be subjected—a fish pond running through a dining-table, and a knight in the armour of the twelfth or thirteenth century, grouped with lacqueys in the plush and scarlet of the nineteenth, were among the most prominent. However, the *fête* was eminently characteristic of its princely designer, and nothing more need be said of it.

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[1] "Gentleman's Magazine," Vol. LXXXI., p. 587.

[2] "Diary of his Parliamentary Life," Vol. II. p. 409.

A touching comparison may be found in an incident that occurred a few weeks subsequently to this *fête*, as described by an eye-witness, who was a distinguished member of the Grenville party, at this period.

"There was a very affecting proof of the King's melancholy state given last week at the concert of ancient music: it was the Duke of Cambridge's night, who announced to the directors that the King himself had made the selection. This consisted of all the finest passages to be found in Handel, *descriptive of madness and blindness*; particularly of those in the opera of 'Samson;' there was one also upon madness from love, and the lamentation of Jephtha upon the loss of his daughter; and it closed with 'God Save the King,' to make sure the application of all that went before. It was a very melancholy, as well as singular instance of sensibility, that in the intervals of reason, he should dwell upon the worst circumstances of his own situation, and have a sort of indulgence in soliciting the public sympathy."[1]

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[1] Horner's "Memoirs and Correspondence."

It is time, however, to return to the condition of the state. The next communication refers to a proposed combination of Mr. Canning and Lord Wellesley, with Lord Grenville and the Opposition. The negociator alluded to as "D.," was the writer of the Secret Despatches.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Thursday.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I write, though, indeed, I have not yet much to say, except that up to yesterday, Canning remained in the determination of abiding by Wellesley, and of making common cause with him, to the extent of acting with Lords Grenville and Holland, to whom alone their plan is to be confided. I met Wellesley yesterday, between whom and me, a coolness had existed for the last fourteen months. He came across, and shaking me most cordially by the hand, asked me when Grenville came to town, expressed the most urgent desire to see him, and then entered into a most violent tirade against the whole policy of ministers. D's conversation with Lord Grenville was most satisfactory. The latter has appointed Wellesley to see him early on Saturday morning. To-morrow, Lord Grenville comes to town, and he has desired me to dine alone with him, to talk all this over. I cannot help seeing that every impediment will be thrown in the way of any co-operation between him and Wellesley, by my uncle Tom, who sees so much cause to dread any connection with Canning, that he cannot persuade himself to look with common patience even on communications with Wellesley; and is angry that D. went down, and that his brother, in consequence, appointed a meeting with Wellesley. All this, joined with Lord Grenville's known disinclination to office, or even to active opposition, will do harm. My persuasion is, that with very little management, all is again at his feet.

Ministers are very desponding. Scotland will not stir for them in either house; and their friends confidently speculate upon change. When an enemy begins to look behind him, it is a symptom of his thinking he must run away. Wellesley is, I do really believe, stout and steady. Canning is so at this moment, and may easily be made to find it his interest to continue so. Wellesley is convinced that Canning will be firm, and will not give way. Canning's friends are as violent in their talk as Wellesley's. Such are the politics of the day. To-night, I am to know more, and the full extent of Canning's intentions up to this moment. To-morrow, therefore, I will write more.

Yours, dutifully and affectionately,

N. T.

In the year 1797, an attempt was made to relieve the bank from the difficulties under which it laboured, in consequence of the extraordinary drain of bullion from the country to pay subsidies, and to meet the expenses of the war, by an Order in Council, followed by a legislative enactment, to prohibit paying in specie, and to allow provincial banks to meet the claims upon them created by their own paper circulation, with Bank of England notes. This caused a gradual depreciation in the paper currency, and rise in the value of the precious metals, till in 1811 the pound note sunk to fourteen shillings, and the ounce of gold rose from £3 17*s.* 10½*d* to £5 11*s.*, which created immense inconvenience, confusion, and distress, throughout every portion of society likely to suffer by such a revolution in the ordinary medium of exchange. "Lord Grenville," says a distinguished writer, "to his great honour, was the first among the authors of the mischievous policy of 1797, to perceive its consequences, and through the rest of his life, he was the man who most deeply regretted it."[1]

The subject attracted the earnest attention of both Houses of Parliament. A bullion committee in the House of Commons, under the direction of Mr. Horner, made a luminous report of the manifold and intolerable evils of the existing system, and Lord Grenville, in the House of Peers, denounced an abuse which prevented any safe system of reckoning, and any clear idea of value: nevertheless, a resolution was passed by a large majority, fixing the values of the bank note and the coin at exactly what they represented, and declaring it a misdemeanour to give for either of them, more or less; a proceeding that sensibly increased the very evils it was intended to remedy, and made more difficult of operation a remedial measure, whenever the legislature should awaken to a sense of its necessity.

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[1] Lord Brougham. "Statesmen of the Time of George III."

CHAPTER IV.

[1811.]

MISCONDUCT OF BLAKE — MOVEMENTS OF LORD WELLINGTON — PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS — NEWS FROM THE PENINSULA — POLITICAL RUMOURS — BRISTOL ELECTION — MOVEMENTS IN SPAIN — LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK IN SICILY — QUARREL BETWEEN THE EMPERORS NAPOLEON AND ALEXANDER — SECRET INTELLIGENCE FROM ST. PETERSBURGH — POSITION OF PRUSSIA — POZZO DI BORGO — POLICY OF THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY — THE PRINCE REGENT AND MR. PERCEVAL — CAVALRY ACTION — LORD WELLINGTON AND SOUZA — INCREASE OF THE KING'S MALADY.

CHAPTER IV.

Admiral Berkeley, in addition to his high appointment in the naval service of Great Britain, held the office of Lord High Admiral of Portugal, a distinction merited by his activity in watching over the interests of that government, from the time he was stationed on the coast. Reference has already been made to the opinions entertained of his services by Lord Wellington; and that opinion was general among the officers of both services who knew anything of the subject.[1] The Admiral took great interest in the military operations that were then going on, and forwarded to his kinsman at Stowe particulars of every movement of importance.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, July 13, 1811.

My Dear Lord,

Since my last, the supineness of the Spaniards have completely marred the plan of attacking Seville, and relieving Cadiz, as Blake[1] wasted his time on the road, and instead of marching rapidly to Seville, where he would have found no opposition, and might have destroyed the enemy's magazines, he lingered till the 28th, although his advanced guard had crossed the Guadiana on the 21st, and were within two leagues of Seville on the 24th; and by this time, Soult got information of him, and immediately marched in a most rapid manner back; and Blake, thinking the whole army of the enemy was coming, has not only repassed the Guadiana, into Portugal, but actually embarked his army at Ayamonte for Cadiz again. One comfort may possibly arise from this, which is the chance of getting rid of him; as nothing can ever succeed with a man so conceited, so obstinate, and so worn out. Ballasteros appears to be the best they have, and has not only spirit and enterprise, but will receive advice, which Blake despises.

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[1] An interesting letter from Lord Wellington to the Admiral, dated June 30, will be found in the "Despatches," Vol. VIII., p. 62.

General Graham has joined us here, and is to command under Lord Wellington, in the room of Spencer, who goes to Halifax. If my friend George is not set out on his travels, I must beg you to make my excuses to him for not answering his very kind letter. But I really expected to see him so soon, that I did not wish to trouble him with a letter which would have pursued him back to the Tagus.

Your last letter enclosed one from the late Captain Shipley's *parent,* but whether it is father or mother, I cannot tell, and therefore wish you to send me the direction to answer it, as I have put the business *en train,* and the monument will be erected as they wish.

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[1] Captain-General Don Joachim Blake, commanded the Spaniards at Albuera, and received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament for his services on that occasion. See Lord Wellington's letter to him.—"Despatches," Vol. VIII., p. 58.

Lord Wellington has drawn his army from the banks of the Guadiana, which begins to be unhealthy, and has cantoned them from Elvas to Campo Mayor, and hutted them on the heights along the side of the Caya, which runs from that town down to the Guadiana; and as the enemy are throwing up fresh works in front of Badajoz, I apprehend they do not mean to take any active steps, but merely to secure that town as a depot, in case Bonaparte determines to prosecute the war in the Peninsula, which will furnish them with supplies, if they invade Portugal through the Alemtejo. I believe, however, that Lord Wellington only waits for the cavalry which is expected from England and Ireland; and he will beat up their quarters, which extend to Caceres and Merida, and by which road is intended to convey their supplies from Madrid.[1]

We are removed from Lisbon to a beautiful small palace of the Prince's, on the edge of the Tagus, near its embouchure, and my ships are anchored close before the door. By this change, we gain a considerable deal of fresh sea air, bathing, and more exercise than could be taken in Lisbon; and I hope to get rid of my rheumatic complaints, which really have almost crippled me.

G. Berkeley.

My son's promotion is not the smallest part of our comfort at this moment. But as his regiment is gone to Guernsey, he will remain upon the staff with Lord Wellington, if he will permit him, or if he is not ordered to join at Guernsey.

More than one subject of interest came before Parliament about this period, prominent among which was

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[1] See Napier. Vol. III., p. 311.

Catholic Emancipation. The motion to concede it was negatived by considerable majorities. On the 24th of July, Parliament was prorogued by Commission, with a speech from the Regent, laudatory of its wisdom and firmness in enabling him to continue the war.

The correspondence affords no light into any of these great questions. We, therefore, pass at once to further Peninsula news, and additional political gossip.

—— TO EARL TEMPLE.

London, July 24, 1811.

There are dispatches (arrived last night) in London from Lord Wellington, but which bring no fresh news. In a letter which I have seen from T. Sydenham, dated, Head-quarters, the 15th, at the *Quinto de St. Jao*, he says, "There is not the slightest chance of a breeze. Of Blake we know nothing; but throughout the French lines, the report is that Ballseteros has taken Seville, and was killed in the assault, on the 29th. For my own part, however, I do not give it credit, and rather think it is spread by them to cover the real causes of their retreat upon Seville." In another place, he says, "Graham is ordered round to join Lord Wellington, with the greater part of his force, from Cadiz. The want of provisions begins to be felt by the French; and Lord Wellington is decidedly of opinion that Marmont and Soult must separate before the end of the month. He has, however, completed all his arrangements for an action; and should the French venture to attack us, I have no doubt they will get a horrible threshing. When Blake separated from us, he had 13,000 good men, and must, by this time, be well advanced beyond the Guadiana.

Asturias is completely evacuated. *But the Spaniards never will do anything for themselves!*

"Our troops are now, thank God, very healthy. Two thousand, of 12, have rejoined their corps. The Portuguese cavalry are very weak and inefficient. They are mounted on miserable horses; and the men are not very bold against the enemy.

"Lord Wellington has made Lord C. Manners an extra aide-de-camp.

"Brigadier General Alava, a Spaniard, is at head-quarters, and is a clever, gentlemanly man. He is of great use to Lord Wellington.

"I have seen much of Castanos. He is amiable and good-humoured, and is a man of the world; and this, I believe, is all that can be said of him. He is not a man to save a sinking state; and I believe he has no merit as an officer.[1]

"The whole army are delighted with the Duke of York's restoration; and I trust there will be now no more difficulty in sending out troops, especially cavalry. If we could bring together five thousand effective British cavalry in the field, *we should ride over the French army.*[1] Why don't you send out some of the heavy dragoons? for they are found to answer admirably. The French cavalry are very much afraid of them, and call them *les messieurs en rouge.* The French compare them to a large moving house, with black walls, and a red roof."

Bessières having advanced from Valladolid to Benevento, has been forced to return *re infecta,* to the former place.

——— TO EARL TEMPLE.

My Lord,

There are despatches arrived this day from Lord Wellington, dated on the 4th or 5th; my informant could not tell which.

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[1] Lord Wellington will have fourteen regiments of cavalry in the field by the 1st of August.

Soult is drawing off his troops in every direction, and Lord Wellington expects Badajoz will be left to its fate. He (Lord Wellington) mentions the *report* having reached him (but no official communication as yet), of Seville having been captured by Ballasteros's division of Blake's army; and that Ballasteros himself was killed in the assault.

He further says, that the operations of both armies must be languid indeed for some time to come.

Lord Wellington has carried many points with the regency, principally respecting the army, which Beresford has proceded to Lisbon [sic] (not on his way home, as has been said) to carry into effect, and then joins the army again.

Nightingale is come home, going out to India on the staff.

My friend has not yet had his letters, but will in the evening, when your Lordship shall hear further *on this head.*

The general belief among the ministry, is that the King will linger some time, but *loudly* talk of the utter impossibility of his resuming his functions. There are hopes afloat amongst Perceval's friends, that *he* will remain in office, and that the change will be but a partial one. My information goes to the direct contrary. "There will be great changes, and, in most instances, a total one; but, in all events, to the entire exclusion of your friends." Such is the language to me. If I can penetrate deeper into this, I will, but certain I am that the Lord Chancellor and Lord Wellesley *expect* to remain. On what the latter's views are founded, I think I can venture an opinion; but I defer writing more at length till to-morrow, as I had but half an hour's conversation in the quarter where alone I can look for information.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Tagus, August 4, 1811.

My dear Lord,

Mr. Claxton, one of the leading men at Bristol, and chairman of our club, and who presided at your brother's nomination and feast, as high steward, has wrote to say, that notwithstanding he has been very much pressed to accept himself of the representation of that city, in case of a dissolution, his infirmities and habits of life will not permit him: and as Colonel Baillie, seventy-eight years old, is determined to withdraw, he wishes to know if I choose to be elected, which he conceived would be done unanimously, if I could be present. This latter part is so doubtful, that of course no decisive answer can be given. But as I am so well known in the place, I do not imagine that would be necessary. I imagine when my letter arrives, if not already done, he will, as chairman of the club, ask Lord Grenville's opinion and possibly his recommendation of a candidate; and, therefore, I wish to apprise you of this, that you may prepare him, as I conceive his stating his opinion would have considerable influence over some of the members, whose interference may be expected, from the differences which had arisen in consequence of the Dock disputes, which, however, are now settled, but might be revived as a sort of excuse for opposition. I have referred Claxton to my friend Dr. Small, as he knows my sentiments, and also everything respecting Bristol and political interests most thoroughly; and as he was most highly gratified by your thanks for his influence at Oxford, he will gladly give you any information; and I dare say would go to you at Stowe, if you wished it, to communicate what he could not do by letter.

I find by the papers, that we have lost our poor friend, Sir W. Young, which I am sure you will feel. The affairs here fluctuate, but still do not show the intentions of the enemy sufficiently to say what they actually mean. Marmont is marching back to Ciudad Rodrigo, which may be occasioned by two causes. Lord Wellington has sent round the battering train to Oporto, and it is shipped in boats to go up the Douro. This may have alarmed him for Ciudad Rodrigo, and he may wish to cover it from attack. On the other hand, Soult has made an attack upon the Isla de Leon, and has been completely repulsed, leaving some hundreds dead. This may, perhaps, be another cause of Marmont's retreat, who is now superior to Lord Wellington, and of course may wish to concentre with the force at Salamanca and Ciudad Rodrigo. Whatever it may arise from, our army is also moving to the north, and General Hill is left in the Alemtejo. But when the extent of Soult's repulse is known, I imagine he will follow Lord Wellington, as nothing then may be apprehended from the enemy on that side of Portugal; which so far is fortunate for our army, as the officers were very much inclined to agues, which is the prevalent disorder in that part of the country.[1]

Yours most sincerely and affectionately,

G. Berkeley.

A new actor and new scenes now present themselves—the former too well known to require introduction, the latter not without attraction, but wanting the interest which gives value to any scrap of intelligence respecting the career of our great Commander.

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[1] Lord Wellington's movements are described in "Napier," Vol. III., p. 326. See also Despatches, Vol. VIII., p. 179, and Alison, "History of Europe," Chap. LXVI.

ADMIRAL FREEMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

"Milford," Palermo, August 28, 1811.

My dear Lord,

The departure of Lord William Bentinck, who leaves this place in the evening, affords me the opportunity of saying I arrived here in the 'Milford' the day before yesterday; and Admiral Boyers sailed to Malta last night.

Lord William's arrival in England will, I dare say, surprise you; but, perhaps, not the ministers, who might well have foreseen that, with such limited powers, he would not be enabled to make any impression on the Court. In his first note, he states expressly that he is directed by his instructions, not to interfere in the internal government of the island; but in a subsequent part, recommends a total alteration in the system of their government, reform of abuses, &c. &c. The answer of the Court is such as could be expected—expressions of satisfaction that it was not in the intention of the Prince Regent to interfere, the determination of the King, to keep *inviolate* his entire control over his own subjects, and a total denial of the statements of any disaffection on the part of the Sicilians to the Court, &c. This is briefly the state of the case, which determined Lord William Bentinck to go himself to England, where I hope he will be furnished with such powers as are now become essentially necessary, and without which we can have little security here. In the mean time, it is difficult to say to what acts of violence the Queen may resort; at least, Lord William Bentinck's behaviour has been such as not to occasion or increase the irritation of her mind. The four Barons remain in durance; but I am not quite persuaded that the Queen may not be induced to relax in her severity towards them; but such is the caprice and inconsistency of her conduct, occasioned by her violence of temper, and the inordinate use of opium, that I defy the best-informed here to judge of the line that will be pursued during the absence of our Minister. In the mean time, I am here with only the 'Milford;' I shall live on shore, to know everything that is going on. I have had some conversation with General Maitland, who commands the troops. The returns are above 15,000.

A report is in circulation, which I believe, that one of the Sicilian privateers belonging to the Queen, captured, about three weeks ago, a Neapolitan vessel from Naples, with a French consul on board, going to Tunis. This man had with him the picture of Murat set in diamonds, with many valuable presents. The whole were brought here to the quarantine; and a few days afterwards, the consul, with his valuables, were sent back to Naples in one of the Queen's vessels. You will judge that we are not very easy here; and the poor Barons dread the interval of our minister's absence.

I confess I am somewhat surprised Lord William should have consented to have taken two such situations, with such a limited authority, knowing, as he did, the state of this country from Lord Amherst and others. But we must have patience; and it is but justice to say, that Lord William's manners and conduct have made a favourable impression on the Sicilians, as well as on the Court. Lord Valentia went from hence in the 'Canopus;' he had been here near five months, and had certainly a better knowledge of the constitution of the island, as well as of the leading characters, than any one known at Palermo. He and Lord William were not good friends; and I regretted his early departure because I lost much valuable information, which time would not allow him to give me.

The Duke of Orleans professes to be devoted to the English, and is on bad terms with the Queen. There is a history of an attempt to assassinate him, which is believed by many.

Monday, a grand ball was given by Lady William. Prince Leopold, and the Duke of Orleans, and two of the Princesses were present; but I did not see any of those who are particularly attached to the Court. Mr. Gibbs, who pays the subsidy here, tells me the Court are continually calling upon him for the money, sometimes even in advance; and according to his opinion, if it was stopped, the governnor could not go on. I was shown an account of the Queen's expenditure for espionage, presents, &c. It amounted £350,000 sterling, yearly. The troops are some three or five months in arrear; they muster on paper nearly eighteen thousand.

Such is the system of terror, that many of the principal people are afraid of appearing at the English minister's house. Yesterday, I was handing a lady to her carriage, whose name I forget; and on being told Ceuello and his wife were coming up stairs, we ran into the kitchen, until they were passed into the drawing-room. I am afraid I shall tire you with Palermo, as I must have done about Minorca; but as my disposition is not to remain idle, I shall endeavour to make myself as well informed of what is going on, as my situation will admit. I dread the expence of the place, because I must keep house and a carriage.

Believe me always,
My dear Sir,
Your faithful and obedient servant,
T. F. F.

P.S. Nothing can have been more candid or sincere in his communications with one, than Lord William; nor anything more amiable than his wife, who is also a great favourite everywhere.

About this time, Lord Grenville, who was never inattentive to the claims of men of real worth, or ever lost an opportunity of forwarding their interests, wrote to Sir Samuel Romilly to offer his influence, he being Steward of Bristol, as well as that of the Duke of Norfolk, towards securing his election for that ancient city. Sir Samuel was gratified by the proposal, but acknowledged that he could not afford a contest.[1] In a contest, however, he was subsequently involved; but retired when he found that the election was going against him.

The game of cross purposes still continued at home; but a game of purposes still more cross was preparing abroad that threatened much graver consequences to the loser. The loving friends at Tilsit, who had divided the world so amicably, with so very little relation to the rights or liberties of the rest of Europe, were becoming tired of their alliance, because they had discovered that it was not likely to be half as profitable as it had promised. In other words, the policy Lord Grenville had consistently advocated as regards strenuous opposition to Napoleon's projects of aggrandizement, was about to receive a remarkable proof of its sagacity, by the natural result of that

"Vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself."

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[1] The letter and the reply are preserved in the "Diary of his Parliamentary Life," Vol. II., pp. 413, 414.

which was so prominent a feature in the character of the Emperor of France. The autocrat of Russia became desirous of retrieving the false steps he had made, and gave evidence of a wish to cultivate closer relations with the Power that alone among the European governments, had shown itself capable of raising up a bulwark against the strides of conquest which the brilliant military genius of the Imperial commander had enabled him to make in every direction. There shortly appeared symptoms of a design of another and more formidable coalition than a common sense of danger had yet been able to create. It fortunately happened at this period, the Seals of the Foreign Office were in the hands of an able man, who, though he found himself misplaced in the Administration, appears to have been the more conscious of the necessity of distinguishing his department by an advance upon the hand-to-mouth policy that seemed to limit the energies of his colleagues.

The interest of the secret despatch about to be printed—which, on the face of it came from the very heart of the ministerial camp—is not confined to anticipations of the *rôles* to be played in the great drama preparing on the theatre of Europe, by the Emperor Alexander, Barclay de Tolly, and Pozzo di Borgo. What follows is equally interesting, for exhibiting the design of the clever Foreign Secretary to supersede his less gifted chief. Unfortunately for himself, he did not possess sufficient influence in or out of the Administration to insure success in such a scheme;

and in a vital part of his programme was in direct opposition to Lords Grey and Grenville; while his rival, however inferior as a statesman, was invulnerable in the lively sympathy of the Court, and the active co-operation of certain of its female members, whose agency, however, as will be seen did not escape the observation or the censure of Parliament.

—— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

September 17, 1811.

Before I touch upon domestic affairs, I shall lay before your Lordship all that I know upon the foreign, upon which the former very materially depends. In the first place, the long expected communication *directly* from the Court of St. Petersburgh, and of the most satisfactory nature, has arrived. I understand, however, its extent to be the determination of Alexander to resist any further attempt of Bonaparte to cripple the commerce of the north; to revenge his annexation of the Hanse Towns to France; and his seizure of the Duke of Oldenburgh's dominions. Further, he is determined to assist either Prussia or Austria, in the event of either being attacked by France. In the interim, he has put his military establishment in Poland upon a footing the most respectable, as well with respect to magazines, commissariat, and hospitals (points heretofore left to accident), as to numbers; there being now not less than 240,000 effective men in that quarter, with a dépôt of 80,000 recruits ready to join the grand armies as they are wanted. In short, it is asserted, upon the best authority, that the state, discipline, and organization of the Russian armies have advanced a century, since the peace of Tilsit. The whole has been directed by Barclay de Tolly, a Prussian, I believe by birth, but considered one of the most able men in Europe. It is from a paper drawn up by him, and transmitted to us through Prince Luberminski, that the above facts are declared. It is a remarkable circumstance that the person pitched upon by Alexander, to be the medium through which, in future, all discussions between the two countries are to take place, is the very person most eligible for us, and the most acceptable to Lord Wellesley; whence the sagacity and good faith of that potentate are inferred. It is expected by Alexander, that the signal for a rupture will be the demand upon him, by Bonaparte, for his debt to Holland (nearly ten millions sterling), which, were he disposed, he has no means of paying; and the two armies which France has moved from the Rhine towards Poland, are supposed to be for the purpose of enforcing payment. They are commanded by Davoust, who will, so soon as they join him, have at least 120,000 effective men.

But if Bonaparte counts upon the co-operation, or even neutrality of Prussia, as a part of his projected attack on Russia (points, I apprehend, absolutely essential to it), he will find himself egregiously mistaken. Through the same channel to which I have adverted in the case of Russia, ministers are assured that Prussia is pledged to Alexander to resist the very first encroachment of France, and to put her last stake in the hazard. She has 124,000 men fit to take the field, and both soldiers and officers universally anxious for the moment which shall restore them their reputation and fame. In the moment in which I write, such is the credence which government gives to the above statement, that stores of various kinds are in transport, and in preparation for the assistance of both powers; and what is more satisfactory is, that no subsidies are required, at least in money, from us. All that is asked is, that we shall not relax our efforts in the Peninsula, which every communication from these powers assert to have been the salvation of Europe for these last two years. Of the good faith of Austria, her abhorrence of France, and her determination to make common cause with Russia and Prussia, and acting with them in the first favourable moment, there seems to be no doubt; and your Lordship is, I presume, aware that our political intercourse with her is in perfect activity, and with the best understanding.

The actual arrival of the communication from Alexander himself, has given the grounds, so long wanting, of completing Liston's instructions, which are now completed, and are so framed as to promise, through our mediation, an accommodation between Russia and the Porte. The war between the former and Persia, barely exists, and, indeed, may be said to have terminated. Of Sweden, it can only be said, that her conduct continues extremely ambiguous, and there is reason to believe, an ambiguity little relished by Bonaparte. As to America, there is no reason to apprehend any immediate rupture; on the contrary, Mr. Forster thinks "that the negociation will train on again." In the mean while, the American ministers have all gone to their respective homes, and everything is suspended till after the meeting of Congress, the 23rd of November next. I am given to understand that Lord Wellesley's instructions to Forster, put the Americans into a dilemna, on one or other of the horns of which they must hang, while he will disarm all opposition here, by making them turn entirely upon the principles of blockade, right of search, and contraband of war, as laid down and acted upon by Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox (even introducing the name of the latter as an authority, in the body of his despatches), and abandoning the ground of the

Orders in Council. In fine, it is the sanguine opinion and belief of Lord Wellesley, that the face of Europe is about to undergo the most material change for the better; and all brought about by his counsels. He has abandoned the coast, or going out of town at all, and works unceasingly at his office. He derives, I understand, the most essential advantages from having gained over a certain Pozzo di Borgo, a Corsican, and even a near relation of Bonaparte, whom the latter has long wished to get into his power, and to whom he has made the greatest offers, but in vain; and they are now the bitterest enemies. This person is, it is said, the cleverest man in Europe, and so universally acknowledged to be, throughout the continent; with him, Lord Wellesley is in perpetual conference, and the greatest results are expected from his advice and sagacity.

But Lord Wellesley is not only self-satisfied of the existence of the facts above stated, but is persuaded that he has produced the same conviction in the mind of the Prince Regent, and that the latter is to the full as sanguine as himself, as to the results to be expected from them. On Saturday se'nnight last, in an audience of four hours, he laid the details of all that I have given your Lordship the outline, before the Prince, who seemed thoroughly satisfied that this great game was on the cards, but at the same time, pointed out the utter impossibility of giving effect to his system, so long as Mr. Perceval persisted in his determination not to push the resources of the country farther than they are employed at present. That he (Lord Wellesley) would not, nor could continue any longer the imperfect instrument of an imperfect system; and, in short, went over all the topics I have more than once before stated to your Lordship; as, for instance, the applying three millions to arming and paying an army in Gallicia. The singularly happy situation in which England was placed, when, instead of subsidizing a new coalition, she is only called upon to pursue her own system steadily in Spain and Portugal; how impossible it was for Lord Wellington to act offensively in Spain, without adopting the proposition respecting Gallicia; and, finally, his belief that there are ample means in the country to provide for the proposed additional expenditure. Upon this latter point, Lord Wellesley has had the means of information, by coming into contact with the most eminent of the London merchants and capitalists, who have been thrown upon him, through the almost entire neglect of Perceval and Lord Bathurst; an opportunity eagerly embraced by Lord Wellesley and of which he has made no small advantage.

The Prince and Lord Wellesley parted with the most perfect cordiality, the former apparently thoroughly convinced by the statements and arguments of the latter; and Lord Wellesley determined to state his resolution officially, as soon as he had worked up the arrears of his official business, which would not take up a fortnight at most from that day; and thus matters rest at present. In the *interim*, the partizans of Lord Wellesley are sanguine (although I think not so much as when I saw your Lordship,) that the Prince will place him at the head of affairs, at the moment of change. I protest I hardly know upon what grounds. With every member of the present government he is in a state of warfare, and seems determined so to be. Recently, Perceval, with a view, I believe, to make up the late violent breach, offered him a seat for Richard Wellesley at the Admiralty Board, which he refused; afterwards one at the Treasury, which he also refused, saying, however, that he would consult the Prince upon it, and would accept it for his son, if he, (the Prince,) advised him so to do.

On a recent occasion, when the Prince was about to give his *fête* on his birthday, the ministers wrote to his Royal Highness a round robin, to express their desire to be allowed to wear his uniform *upon that occasion.* To this Lord Wellesley refused to be a party, but asked that favour of the Prince in person, who conceded it most graciously; and he now *always* sports the blue and buff! I presume it must be that, as the Prince is determined to make an administration, of which he is determined to be himself the framer, and to carry on the war in Spain on principles known to be adverse from those of Lords Grenville and Grey; and as Perceval will not go to the lengths, which, according to Lord Wellesley, are necessary to carry on the war with effect; and that Lord Wellesley, on whom everything turns, will not serve any longer with Perceval; therefore he, Lord Wellesley, will be the only person eligible to that high situation. How he is to make up his government, is another affair; but it is said, with great exultation, that the Prince has gained over the great houses of Norfolk, Percy, and Cavendish—that these great Dukes will not act with Perceval, but have no objection to do so with Lord Wellesley. There is, also, I apprehend, some hope of Lord Holland, who, beside that he will not act hostilely against the Prince, for old connection sake, will be tempted by high situation abroad (Spain, for example, which is greatly his object), and which he is constantly urged to accept, by Lady Holland.

Indeed, the Duke of Sussex openly said, last week, that Lord Holland was gained; and if Lord Holland, there are strong hopes of Lord Lansdowne, whose attachment to the former is said to be inviolable. For the rest, there is Canning and his following certainly, and Castlereagh upon very easy terms.[1]

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[1] This is a mistake. Lord Castlereagh soon proved that he was not to be had, except upon his own terms.

Add to all this, that every individual of the royal family, are eager (for objects of their own,) that Lord Wellesley should be at the head of a government, where it is understood that all the patronage is to be, by an actual agreement, in the disposition of the Prince, while the latter, who has no objection to this part of the system, is dazzled by the brilliant prospect which the new continental coalition affords, and by the hopes that his will be the government under which the ruin of Bonaparte and his house will be effected. As to the principles upon which this new government is to be formed, Lord Wellesley requires no pledge to be given, except as to the vigorous prosecution of the war against France. Upon the cruciform question of Ireland, and even of reform, he is open to conviction, upon their full and fair discussion! Your Lordship is now in possession of everything which I could bring within the compass of one letter. I shall to-morrow trouble you with one on the other topics of your Lordship's note.

The great political movement just described, must be regarded as a repetition of that which led to the quarrel of Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning; with this difference, that now the Marquis Wellesley was in office, and was straining every nerve to oust a colleague, to introduce his friend Mr. Canning, just as the latter had exerted all his influence to get rid of Viscount Castlereagh, to introduce his friend, the Marquis Wellesley. Mr. Canning, at this period, possessed a considerable parliamentary following—certain friends in the House of Commons, who were ready to vote with him on all subjects, and support him on every occasion. Possibly he may have hoped to make his own terms with the government, by bringing this support, in addition to his acknowledged talent; but it is singular what a dread he inspired in some of the ministers—a difficulty his friend in office found insurmountable. As early as 1807, Lord Eldon, writing to Sir William Scott, says, "I am not the least surprised at what you say about C. I have, for some time, thought that much less than a dissolution would serve him as a cause of separation, and I suspect that Lord G. [Grenville] has known him so well by flattering his vanity on the one hand, by making him the person of consequence to be talked with, and alarming that vanity on the other, by disclaiming intercourse through anybody, with the Pittites as a body, to make him the instrument of shaking among the Pittites, that mutual confidence which was essential to give them weight, and thus to keep them in the state of a rope of sand, till a dissolution, when he won't care one fig for them all put together."[1]

With respect to the Lord Chancellor's observations on Lord Grenville, it is easy to prove that they are the offspring of partizan antagonism. Lord Grenville admired the talent of Mr. Canning, but certainly never stooped to flatter him in any way, and his brother more than once expressed opinions respecting his political conduct,[2] as completely at variance with any idea of making use of him in the manner imagined by Lord Eldon. In fact, by the more experienced members of the Grenville party, he was so distrusted, that the mere rumour of a coalition with him, excited the greatest repugnance. On the other side, Lord Eldon's aversion, excited principally by his breaking up the Cabinet in 1809, and his conviction that Mr. Canning had endeavoured to deprive him of the Great Seal, to advance his own objects,[1] was sure to be a stumbling block in the way of that gentleman's admission into a government of which Lord Eldon was an influential member.

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[1] Twiss. "Life of Lord Eldon," Vol. I., p. 358.

[2] "Courts and Cabinets of George III." Vol. IV., p. 384.

Admiral Berkeley helps to unravel the twisted skein of Portuguese politics, and throws a little light upon the dark intrigues of that unworthy member of the Portuguese government, Principal Souza, who became at last such an annoyance to Lord Wellington, that he determined to remove himself from the sphere of his influence.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Tagus, September 29, 1811.

My Dear Lord,

I wrote two letters in haste last week, but they contained nothing new. At present, however, a little affair has happened, which I conceive, will not go farther, as it was most probably an attack of the enemy to cover their convoy of stores and provisions into Ciudad Rodrigo. On the 24th instant, between seven and eight in the morning, the centre of our lines was attacked by a very large body of horse and infantry, supported by some heavy cannon, and they penetrated to our artillery, where they were charged by three squadrons of Light Horse, the 5th regiment, British, and 21st regiment, Portuguese infantry, who drove them back with great slaughter, and a most disgraceful flight. Lord Wellington was in the thick of it, and the correspondent who wrote this to me, supposes a fresh attack may be made. But this I doubt, as their object was probably obtained, and Ciudad Rodrigo furnished with provisions. But as I am in hourly expectation of the army despatches, I will not close my letter until I can tell you. The field was covered with their dead, and the superiority of our cavalry most decidedly proved, as well as the increased coolness and steady conduct of the Portuguese troops. I imagine their intention is to keep their depots, if possible, at Ciudad and Badajoz, as very convenient spots to enter Portugal, if Bonaparte can settle his affairs in the North, and can find troops and provisions sufficient to maintain them on their march.

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[1] "What will you think of politicians, when I tell you that it has even been suggested, that Perceval should return to the Law, and be made Chancellor, and that to provide for keeping things together in this way, I should retire. Perceval himself told me this; he did not name Canning as proposing it, but I take upon suspicion that to have been so; and then, Perceval being Chancellor, Canning might be Minister. Perceval treated this as he ought."—Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon, Vol. i. p. 412.

We are rather in daily expectation of great changes in the government of this country, as by this time something must have been decided upon Lord Wellington's letter of resignation to the Prince of the Brazils, in consequence of the mad and outrageous conduct of the priest Souza, who governs here, and is brother to the prime minister of the Court of Rio Janeiro. He wrote to him, that Lord Wellington's plans were bad, and that he had ruined the country more than the French could have done, and Stuart, our minister here, withdrew from the Regency in consequence, and has not attended it for four months. How it will end I know not, as the events have given the best refutation of his falsehood, and it is quite out of the question to continue to act under this fellow's ungovernable but weak measures. I imagine he has complained to his brother in England, (the envoy,) of my having withdrawn myself from his acquaintance, as I find some little intrigue has been made use of. But Lord Wellington, as well as Beresford, I believe, have stated the impolicy, as well as their most thorough protest against my being superseded, and from what I hear, Mr. Yorke has dropt that idea, which he at one time had in contemplation, at the expiration of my three years. The news of the insurrection at Cayenne, and the murder of the Governor has just reached us here, and I suppose will occupy the attention of the Brazils for some time; this event you perhaps received notice of in England before it reached us here, as all the news of that part of the world goes much sooner to England than to Portugal. Emily desires to join me in best love to all yours, and

Believe me, ever yours most sincerely and affectionately,

G. Berkeley.

October 2.

I shall close my letter, as it will be a Gazette business, which, of course, will give it you more in detail. But it has ended exactly as I thought. Marmont paraded his whole army in our front, while he got his convoy into Ciudad, and after the attack of his cavalry and cannon, which was most gallantly repulsed by two of our divisions, and many prisoners taken, he has retired into his old positions, and we to ours between the Agueda and Coa. We have lost between two and three hundred wounded and killed in this affair, in which the 11th Light Dragoons and 1st Hussars have done wonders. The enemy had possession of the five

Portuguese guns for a minute, but the 5th regiment gave so tremendous a fire, and rushed on them with their bayonets, that they broke and fled, and many were taken, besides numbers killed by the guns in their retreat.[1]

From another communication the reader will learn more respecting the position of our commander in the Peninsula, and respecting the more melancholy position of the sovereign at home.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, October 25, 1811.

My dear Lord,

You have been travelling about so much, that I have not troubled you with a letter. There is nothing material now to communicate, excepting that the bodily health of the King daily loses ground; and Sir H. Halford's report of this morning is, that for the last ten days, there has been a visible decrease of strength and constitution. The Duke of Kent called upon me this morning, and says, that the violence of his mental malady has been greater for the last fortnight than it has ever been. John Willis has so completely given up all idea of the possibility of amendment, that he does not come again to Windsor. Symonds and Munro were to be there to-day. The Council wish to put the whole management of the King under the former of these two; but the Queen objects to it, on account of her promise to the King, *never to allow Symonds or John Willis again to have charge of him.* The object of the Council in urging it, is to have it to report at the meeting of Parliament, that all advice had been resorted to. The Prince of Wales comes down every Sunday with the Duke of Cumberland. I hear the former and the Queen are on very bad terms, but I know not on what grounds. He is extremely quiet, and only dreading the prospect of the day when he must make his decision. The question of Ireland is parried judiciously enough for a short time, but come it must; and *I know*, as I dare say you do equally, that the Prince is pledged as strongly as man can be (even of a very late date), to support the Catholics.

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[1] See Lord Wellington's Letters to the Secretary of State, in "Despatches," Vol. viii., p. 303.—Also, "Napier," Vol. iii., p. 335.

There has been much contention between Lord Wellesley and Perceval, both on the question of Portugal and Sicily; for the moment they have been reconciled, but the bad omen of our last despatches from Lord Wellington will not mend the matter. The state of our army in the Peninsula is lamentable, in point of sickness; and much as I love Lord Wellington, I cannot see how he can satisfy the country upon moving the whole of the British force from the south to the north, to invest Rodrigo, without the hope or chance of succeeding, and risk a battle which was only avoided by the most hasty flight, merely, as he states, because he wished to *see* the enemy. Conceive our Minister leaving his army destitute of cavalry all the summer, when it could have been fed and employed with so much advantage in the Alemtejo, and then sending all that could be shipped in the Autumn, to the north, where they had no provision, and no means of acting. There has been, for the last two months, upwards of 600,000 tons of hay weekly exported from this country for our cavalry in Portugal, not to speak of grain, which keeps up the price so immoderately at this moment.

Felton Hervey has again distinguished himself greatly. He made several charges; and my wife had a letter from Lady E. Berkeley, full of nothing but encomiums on his conduct, which, she says, was the theme of the whole army. The person in whom he places most confidence, and who is always with him, a sort of aide-de-camp, is young Badcock whom he speaks of constantly in the highest terms, not only to us, but to Lord Bridgewater.

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CHAPTER V.

[1811.]

MR. TIERNEY'S OPINION ON THE CONDUCT OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS —THE PRINCE REGENT'S DISCONTENT—STATE OF SICILY—ACCIDENT TO THE PRINCE REGENT—DUKE OF CLARENCE AND LADY CATHERINE LONG — MRS. JORDAN — DIFFICULTIES OF THE MINISTRY — SECRET DESPATCH RESPECTING FOREIGN STATES — AFFAIRS IN SPAIN — ADMIRAL BERKELEY — THE ROYAL DUKES — LORD WELLESLEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE PRINCE REGENT—NEWS FROM SPAIN—A NEW WINE—QUARREL BETWEEN THE PRINCE REGENT AND THE DUKE OF CUMBERLAND—LIBERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CIVIL LIST—LORD SIDMOUTH'S COMMUNICATIONS WITH MR. PERCEVAL.

CHAPTER V.

The writer of the following letter, who enjoyed more celebrity from having been the opponent of Pitt, than the colleague of Addington, was now, by the shuffling of the political cards, one of the leaders of Opposition, in whose ranks he shortly afterwards gained a prominent position as a ready and bitter assailant of ministers. His parliamentary career has been sketched by an able pen that has summed up its good and evil in a friendly spirit, yet has not forgot to state the allegation brought against that minister, who secured him for his administration: "In reference to the rather useless acquisition which he appeared to have made that he resembled the worthy but not very acute lord who bought Punch."[1] In Opposition, Mr. Tierney proved himself more formidable than in office, and came forward as a powerful debater on more than one great question; but it was in personal attack that his services were most appreciated by his party; and whenever an unfortunate minister was thought to be assailable, the honourable and learned member was sure to be put up to worry him, till the former had exhausted his powers of vituperation.

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[1] Lord Brougham. "Statesmen of George III." Second Series.

The Catholics of Ireland had unwisely commenced a movement which their friends in England found it impossible to forward. In short, as may be gathered from Mr. Tierney's note, it was likely to embarrass them, and they, therefore, were desirous of putting a stop to it as speedily as possible. The subsequent intelligence affords another illustration of the state of this very singular government.

RIGHT HONOURABLE G. TIERNEY TO EARL TEMPLE,

Brighton, Nov. 14, 1811.

MY DEAR LORD,

I quite agree with you in the propriety of standing still for the present, and waiting for events. According to all appearances, the reasonable presumption is, that we shall stand upon higher and safer ground, two or three months hence, than we do at this day.

Since I saw you, I have had a letter from Lord Grey, and I am glad to find that his opinion quite coincides with that which you and I have of the conduct of the Catholic bishops in Ireland. He has written to Lord Grenville on the subject, and I trust that, without loss of time, some communication of the nature we talked of will be made to Lord Fingal, or whoever else may be the proper person to deal with. The address of the Catholics in Kilkenny, which I read in the "Globe" of Saturday, renders such a step still more necessary. I am sorry to say that Grey gives a very unpleasant account of his health, and his own statement is too much confirmed by what I hear from other quarters. He was to go to Edinburgh on Monday last for medical advice.

Information of my own quite confirms what you state of the discontent which prevails in the highest quarter. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise; and the late most extraordinary address from Middlesex, which government does not appear even to have tried to prevent, must naturally add to the displeasure already excited. But what then? I am no believer in the Prince doing anything for us, and consequently do not expect to see your suggestion carried into effect.

I have heard nothing more from Spain since I saw you, but I presume we shall soon have an arrival from that quarter, and one, probably, of considerable importance.

I leave this place on Wednesday se'nnight, and shall then be stationary in town, where, as some business may bring you up for a day or two, I hope we shall meet.

Believe me to be,
My dear Lord,
Yours faithfully,
GEORGE TIERNEY.

The state of Sicily at this period was well deserving the attention of English statesmen.

ADMIRAL FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS BUCKINGHAM.

Palermo, November 19, 1811.

MY DEAR LORD,

Nothing material has occurred here since I wrote last, but the public appear very anxious for the return of Lord William Bentinck, who, I hope, will have procured sufficient powers to remedy all the inconveniences of the Sicilian government, which is exclusively in the hands of Neapolitans, who have no interest in Sicily. For the last month, everything has been particularly quiet (which is so unusual), that we are in expectation of hearing a something from the Court, which is to astonish the English. It is said the Prince of Catolica has presented a plan of defence for Palermo, in the event of our making any demands which are not congenial to the Queen. Her policy appears to be that of procrastination, and her mind is much impaired since her last attack.

I have sent my brother a full account of the spy that has been apprehended. It is a very mysterious business, and the desire of the government to put him at liberty does not tend to convince me that he was not sent with their concurrence. Captain Duncan, with the 'Impérieuse' and 'Thames,' and two hundred and sixty troops from Melazzo, have very gallantly taken Polinuso, destroyed the fort, and brought away with them between thirty and forty sail of vessels, among which number are ten gun-boats. They were principally laden with oil, &c., and had twenty large spars for the arsenal at Naples. Our loss has been seventeen men killed and wounded.

I have lately been at sea for a week, having had occasion to see General Maitland. I went to Melazzo, and rode over to Messina. I regret exceedingly I had not time to go to the mountain, which is now in a state of eruption. We sailed by the Lipari islands, and saw Stromboli in perfection. Lady William Bentinck, Mademoiselle d'Orleans, and Madame Montjoie, with some English, accompanied me. I had intended to have looked into the bay of Naples, but the wind being so much to the northward and westward, that I did not choose to prolong my cruize, under the expectation of the arrival of Lord William Bentinck.

John Talbot, in the 'Victorious,' has been here a month. I sent him yesterday, with the Archduke Francis, to Cagliari. He (the Archduke) is very popular with the English; having made the tour of the island, and stayed some days at Messina, where he was followed by General Maitland—he came on board the 'Milford,' and appears a well-informed man. I believe he will be married to the daughter of the King of Sardinia. Sir Edward Pellew writes me word he has four ships crippled by the late gale, and that he was going to the coast of Catalonia, where the Catalans are again in force, and have taken every place in the neighbourhood of Barcelona, interrupting many convoys. I have some hopes of that province—certainly the only one in Spain that has made great exertions—under the protection of Sir Edward Pellew and Colonel Green, men very different from Cotton and Doyle; but Sir Edward has yet to learn that the gales off Toulon in the winter are very severe. He has sent the French officers, who were prisoners at Mahon, (and intriguing) to England; declined all correspondence with Cuesta, the Captain-General at Majorca, and is trying to annex the island of Minorca to the government of the Captain-General of Catalonia. The Governor of Mahon has apprehended several of the Minorquins most attached to the English, and the Walloons, are at present quite paramount. Our squadron in the Adriatic is much reduced. All the ships are now off Lissa: in fact, it is impossible to blockade Corfu, in the winter. As my orders are not to interfere with the arrangements of Captain Rowley, who is the senior officer there, I simply transmit his letters to the Commander-in-Chief. If otherwise, I should occasionally take a run to the Adriatic, and see how matters are going on.

I am every way better pleased with the 'Milford.' She sails well, and is a noble man-of-war; my captain is a very fine young man, and I have no reason to complain of anything. I should like to have more occupation; but I am flattering myself the government will not let 20,000 men remain locked up in Sicily next spring. There are very few French troops in Italy, and the Neapolitans are not to be depended upon—so little, that Bonaparte has discontinued the conscripts, from their constant desertion when on service. Murat is nominally King of Naples still; but I believe the command of the troops is exclusively in the power of Regnier. I had hopes of seeing Lord George here this year. We could have made it pleasant to him for a few months. I beg my best respects to all the family, and am always, my dear Lord,

Your most affectionate and faithful servant,

T. F. FREMANTLE.

Here follows a complete budget of the movements of the royal family; but the false step of the Regent was this time far more innocent in its source, and more painful in its results than those of his brothers. The anecdote is an amusing illustration of Court life, and proves that the now well-known Scottish dance was at this period considered a fashionable accomplishment. The official account of the accident published at the time, gave quite a different complexion to the affair.[1]

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[1] "A ball was given by the Duchess of York at Oatlands, for the purpose of introducing the Princess Charlotte into company. The Prince led off the dance, and chose his daughter for his partner, but whilst leading her briskly along, his right foot came in contact with the leg of a sofa, which gave the limb a twist, by which two tendons of his foot were broken."

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green. Nov. 28, 1811.

My dear Lord,

As you will be interested in knowing the particulars of the Prince of Wales' attack, I write to say that, although it was nothing but a strain of the muscle, yet he has made so much of it, and it affected him so greatly, that it has created a great sensation. It was done while Princess Charlotte was at Oatlands; she was endeavouring to dance the Scotch step, called the *Highland Fling,* and there was a laugh in endeavouring to make Adam (who was one of the party) teach her. The Prince got up, and said he would show her; and in doing so, evidently wrenched his ancle; this took place ten days ago, since which he has *never been out of his bed.* He complained of violent pain and spasmodic affection; for which he prescribed for himself, and took a hundred drops of laudanum every three hours. When Farquhar and the other medical men came down, they saw him, under the influence of this laudanum, so enervated and hurt, that they immediately prescribed the strongest dose of castor oil, which of course relieved him; but he still perseveres in his laudanum, which, he says, relieves him from pain: and lays *constantly on his stomach* in bed. He will sign nothing, and converse with no one on business (I speak up to yesterday); and you may imagine, therefore, the distress and difficulty in which the Ministers are placed. The Duke of Cumberland is going about saying it is all sham, and that he could get up, and would be perfectly well if he pleased. I protest, I think he is so worried and perplexed by all the prospect before him, and by the necessity which now arises of his taking a definitive step, that it has harassed his mind, and rendered him totally incapable, for want of nerves, of doing anything;

and in order to shun the necessity, he encourages the illness, and continues in his bed. You may rely upon the fact, as I tell you of his situation up to yesterday.

After a most violent struggle between the Queen, the doctors, and all the boutique of Windsor, and the Queen's Council, Dr. John Willis has agreed to stay at Windsor; his brother to act under him. But I know he says the malady is so confirmed, that there is no hope of recovery, or even of amendment; but the bodily health as good as ever.

You have probably heard all the history of the Duke of Clarence. Before he went to Ramsgate, he wrote to Lady C***** L*** to propose, who wrote him a very proper letter in answer, declining the honour in the most decided terms. After his arrival, he proposed three or four times more; and upon his return to town, sent her an abstract of the Royal Marriage Act altered, as he said it had been agreed to by the Prince of Wales, whom he had consulted; and also conveyed the Queen's best wishes and regards—to neither of whom had he said one single word on the subject. Upon finding she had accepted Pole (who, by the bye, is solely indebted to him for this acceptance), he wrote to Lord Keith, to propose for Miss Elphinstone, who, in the most decided and peremptory terms, rejected him; he is, notwithstanding, gone to his house. During all this, when he returned to town, he wrote to Mrs. Jordan at Bushy, to say she might have half the children, viz., five, and he would allow her £800 per annum. She is most stout in rejecting all compromise, till he has paid her what he owes her; she stating that, during the twenty years she has lived with him, he has constantly received and spent all her earnings by acting; and that she is now a beggar, by living with, and at times supporting him. This she repeats to all the neighbourhood of

Bushy, where she remains, and is determined to continue. While all his gallantry was going forward at Ramsgate, the Duke of Cumberland (who must interfere in everything) apprised Mrs. Jordan of what he was doing. Mrs. Jordan then writes him a most furious letter, and another to the Duke of Cumberland, to thank him for the information; and by mistake, directs them wrong; in consequence of which, there has been, of course, a scene between the brothers. Altogether, the conduct of these illustrious personages is a most melancholy and alarming feature in the difficulties which every hour increase upon us; and it is not without great forbearance one can impute it to any other ground but an affection of the same nature as that under which the King labours.

The ministry are under the greatest difficulties, which, of course, aggravate the ill-will subsisting between Perceval and Lord Wellesley. I have no doubt they will try to botch some change or addition before Parliament meets; they will find it nearly impracticable to add much to their strength, even if the Prince of Wales would lend himself heartily to such a measure; but my firm belief is, that they will not be able to give him sufficient nerve *to do anything.*

Ever with great respect and attachment,
Most affectionately.

Another secret despatch places the reader in possession of the Foreign Minister's portfolio. The most noticeable portion is the *quietus* which it promises for Principal Souza.

—— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

November 30, 1811.

From the various sources of information which government possess on the continent, it appears very certain that Bonaparte has returned to Paris, very ill satisfied with the results of his northern tour. With Prussia, although he so far succeeded as to cause her to discontinue the throwing up lines on the Spree, began in the summer, evidently to protect Berlin from a *coup de main*; yet he could not so far prevail, as to cause a reduction of her troops, the dismantling of her fortresses (eight in number, including those in Silesia), nor stop her recruiting, which latter, to this hour, goes on with the utmost activity and effect; and so suspicious is he, Bonaparte, of the state of things in this quarter, as to keep 24,000 men at Rostock, ready to act at a moment's warning. With Russia, things are still more menacing. All intercourse of civility has entirely ceased between the two Courts; and that of St. Petersburg steadily persists in her non-acquiescence to the continental exclusion system, enforced by Bonaparte everywhere else. As late as the 10th ultimo, the return of Russian troops on the Polish frontier amounted to fifteen military divisions in the most complete order, estimated by themselves at 175,000 firelocks; by us, at 150,000, independently of the reserve of 30,000, and a levy of recruits in training, of 80,000. The whole of this force is so distributed, as to be brought, every man, to the assistance of Prussia, if attacked, in six weeks. The reported vehemence of Bonaparte to Prince Kurakin, is indubitably true, and has produced its full effect upon the Emperor Alexander. What is more immediately apprehended on the continent, is some direct attempt upon the person of the King of Prussia, by the French troops at Rostock. With Sweden, France is by no means too cordial: and a recent demand of the latter, for an auxiliary body of Swedish troops, has been refused with a tone very far removed from that humility which was looked for. Austria, intent upon the repair of her finances, is at the same time upon the alert in respect of her armies; and while her intercourse with France is hourly decreasing, the best understanding subsists between her and the remaining continental powers. In short, did not Russia persist in her absurd war of injustice and aggrandizement with Turkey, (in aid of which she was compelled, from recent losses, very lately to detach two full divisions from the Polish frontier, under M. G. Woronzow), much might immediately be expected in that quarter. As it is, your Lordship will see, if the foregoing statements be correct, that it is utterly impossible that Bonaparte can spare a single man from Germany for the conquest of Spain.

In the interim, all our agents have arrived at the different places of their destination, have succeeded in every object of their respective missions; and results the most flattering are augured from the existing state of affairs in the north of Europe. From Sicily, dispatches have arrived of a date so late as the 27th ultimo, and which enable Lord W. [William Bentinck] confidently to state that he has not a doubt of settling every matter in dispute to the entire satisfaction of both countries.

The Queen had had an apoplectic attack, from which she was saved by bleeding in the foot. Her weakness was, however, such, when our messenger came away, as to induce her to take leave of all her family, and to receive the last rites of the Church. Her confessor and her physician had both strongly insisted, both for the good of her soul and body, that she should never again meddle with public business; indeed, the latter confidently predicts her immediate dissolution, should she ever again suffer any the least agitation of spirits. Indeed, in no case can her life be long protracted, being afflicted with a fistula, for which she cannot be operated upon, from some peculiarity in her case. She is now in her sixty-eighth year.

The apprehension of embroiling ourselves either with Turkey or Russia, still prevents Lord Wellesley from sending out Liston, to whom appeals would doubtless be made by both, very difficult to be evaded, or decided upon. At Cadiz, nothing can be more turbulent or more unsatisfactory. The anti-Anglican party are uppermost; and it is with the utmost difficulty H. W. [Henry Wellesley] can maintain his footing there. Nothing can persuade them but that we are inimical to their real interests, and are only attentive to our own; while, instead of employing the stores, arms, and ammunition we supply them with, against the common enemy, they invariably send them out to reduce their own colonies. It is, however, allowed, on all hands, that Blake has fought well, and all are very eager for his reports. The commissioners for settling the disputes between Spain and her Indies, sail in the 'Grampus' in about ten days. They go first to Lisbon, where they take up Charles Stuart, and proceed to Cadiz. I need not tell your Lordship, nothing whatever is expected from this measure. My friend, T. Syd—, goes to Lisbon in the room of Stuart; and while he stays there, I shall have a most valuable correspondence. I presume your Lordship knows that subsequently to General Hill's engagement with Gerard,[1] that he advanced to Merida, and totally destroyed the magazines there; and even there are some letters to state that he crossed the Guadiana, in further annoyance of the enemy. Your Lordship is already in possession of the causes of discontent in Lord Wellington, with the Portuguese Regency, &c., and will be glad to hear, they are entirely and for ever done away. The Prince has recently written to him from the Brazils, in the most accommodating and conciliating style. He conjures him to point out his wishes in every respect, and gives him the power even of modelling the temporary government of Portugal, at his own will and pleasure, without any reference whatever to him, the Prince Regent—in short, conjuring him, as his saviour and friend, not now, after having saved his honour, and that of his people, to abandon him, and give him up to the just indignation of the whole world, for giving any cause of complaint to one to whom all mankind were so much indebted. In short, Lord Wellington is now, for the first time, perfectly easy in his situation, contented and happy. But your Lordship will be better pleased to find that this correspondence has also extended, and with still more beneficial effects, personally considered, to Admiral Berkeley, whom he has formally requested to continue in the command of his fleet, which he authorizes him to reform, in the same manner as General Beresford had his army, and who has accordingly set about so doing. The measure was peculiarly well-timed, as it affects Admiral Berkeley. Our present Admiralty having determined to supersede him when his three years had fully expired, and put some Captain there, with the rank, &c., of Commodore. Two reports which I have seen, make the Admiral's appointments, one £16,000 per annum, the other nearly £20,000. In either case, superadded to the Admiral's own wishes of staying there so long as Lord Wellington had the command, the station must have been a most important object to him. Your Lordship will see much of these resolutions on the part of the Court of Brazil have been dictated hence. In short, Lord Wellington found the means of effectually terrifying Souza here, and compelling him to dictate to his master what should be done. In respect of his wishes for his brother's case, it cannot be wondered at that he should take his part. And I can assure your Lordship, that very strong personal considerations for Admiral Berkeley and his connexions induced him in this manner to thwart, by the only effectual means, the ill-natured selfishness of Mr. Yorke. I have thus cleared away almost every point which would prevent my entering upon such domestic details as I think would interest your Lordship.

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[1] "Wellington Despatches," Vol. VIII., p. 380.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, December 1, 1811.

My dear Lord,

It is such an age since I heard from you, that I trust you are well. It was with sincere joy I heard from Louisa Harvey, that Lord Cobham was very much recovered, and I hope you are at ease about him. Our affairs are much the same, and I believe Lord Wellington has prevented any relief being thrown into Ciudad Rodrigo. But the ignorance and fatality which attend every movement of Blake, has done as much mischief, as otherwise Suchet's army must have starved, and both Saguntum and Valencia would have been retained by Spain, which I fear is not the case. Besides, it gives them an opportunity of reinforcing Soult, whose situation was rendered so very critical, by the affair of General Hill on his right, and of Ballasteros on his left, that he had begun to retire all his outposts, and withdraw his cannon from the besieging army before Cadiz. I think, however, we may hear of a success towards Tariffa, as Coupono had been joined by Colonel Skerrett and one thousand British, and the enemy being ignorant of it, had detached fifteen hundred men to cut off Coupono. I wrote to you by Captain Bullock, and sent you some acorns of the sweet and bitter evergreen oak. May they thrive, and may you have long life to see them, is my sincere wish.

All our troop ships are sent out to me, and I have ordered two of them back with invalids and prisoners.

I remain, ever yours, most affectionately,
G. B.

By the forthcoming revelation, the ministerial *embroglio* appears to have become more involved, which the share the royal brothers took in it, by this account, did not lessen. The description of the change that followed when the Marquis Wellesley's elevation became doubtful, is extremely graphic. The Prince Regent, with the active friends of Mr. Perceval so close at hand, could not be brought to sanction any immediate alteration in the government that might be productive of increased trouble to himself.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

December 2, 1811.

My Lord,

For nearly two months after I had the honour of seeing your Lordship in the autumn, the same spirit of exultation and confidence which I then stated to exist in the language of the personal friends of Lord Wellesley, as to his certain accession to the premiership, continued to prevail. During this interval, the Dukes of York, Clarence, Kent, and Sussex, all spoke of it in their respective circles as a settled point, and the three latter actually negociated with him for their various objects, in contemplation of such an event. For example, the Duke of Kent, who considers himself the most injured and aggrieved person in the world in not being actively employed in his profession at the same moment that the Duke of York was restored, sent a person to him respecting his objects, namely, the command in the Mediterranean or the Ordnance, without a seat in the Cabinet. The Duke of Sussex spoke of his wishes for Jamaica, &c., &c., &c.; and so of the rest. And even an humble servant of your Lordship's was repeatedly and reproachfully pressed for a list of such situations as he might legally hold, without stint or limit as to income. During this period also, the personal intercourse between the Prince Regent and Lord Wellesley continued with unabated frequency and apparent warmth of attachment on the part of the former. The continent was conquered over and over again in these interviews, and Europe divided anew between the various legitimate ex-kings and princes, now disengaged from the toils of government.

At the close of this time, however, a visible change took place. A profound silence in those to whom I have already alluded, took the place of noisy and even indiscreet exultation; if any questions were asked touching a change, they were answered with acrimony and reserve. If the Prince was spoken of, insincerity and want of steadiness of character was hinted at; and what could be expected of one who could not be brought to any principle of action by which his friends could be guided, and who would thus be thrown at last into the hands of those he detested, merely from not taking a decided line at an early period, notwithstanding he was warned that this would be the case, &c., strongly pressed upon the subject, and that repeatedly. That *éclat*, too, to which I have before called your Lordship's notice, had not burst upon the public early in the winter, which was to shed such floods of radiance upon the Foreign Office; and, of consequence, its efforts were postponed interminably. Personal attentions and that intercourse I before spoke of, were much less frequent, and the Wellesley star seemed to be no longer the lord of the ascendant. I do not pretend to trace this change to the following circumstance; but at least it affords a remarkable coincidence.

In the latter portion of time, the visits of the Duke of York at Carlton House became much more rare than in the former; while those of the Duke of Cumberland increased in an inverse proportion in the same period; and the latter contrived *generally* to make the Chancellor of the party; and it is further observable, that the Prince's language with respect to Perceval and his Irish politics, underwent a very remarkable change. The language of those most intimate with the Prince, now is, that he considers the conduct of the Catholics as personally hostile to him, inasmuch as it shows an utter distrust of his intentions, when he should be his own master; and in the interim agitates his government to the centre—and that so long as they assumed this menacing attitude, he would give way to no change which would distinctly favour their objects. This distinctly refers, your Lordship will see, to a continuance of the present people, and affords him a plausible pretence of leaving things as they are, which strikes me to be the part the most consonant to his love of ease, and, I apprehend, personal timidity of character.

But your Lordship knows no person to whom this resolution would be more offensive, than to Lord Wellesley himself, however he may constitute a portion of that government. He has already distinctly committed himself on the declaration to all his present friends, and even to the Prince Regent, that his holding office is but temporary, and will last only till the latter has the opportunity of choosing his ministers; and that he would not continue to serve under Mr. Perceval; in short, that he would not be the inefficient instrument of our inefficient system. So that, looking to almost every possible event, save that of his own succession as Premier, he must fall to the ground. Of the probability of his standing his ground as Minister, one can only judge from the following facts. He has not the certainty of one of the present Cabinet acting with him in such an event; there is a possibility of Camden, provided he take in Castlereagh; and of Liverpool, upon the general attachment he has to office, under any leader—but of every one of the rest, he would have to meet much more than probably their active hostility! Let us give him then Canning, and behold all the materials he has, even in contemplation, for a government which he may have to form next month!

But within a very recent period indeed, the tone of Lord Wellesley's friends has almost reached its former joyous note. On Tuesday morning last, a messenger came hither, with a note to my friend (then on a visit to his brother-in-law in the village) from Lord Wellesley, desiring him to come up instantly, as he wished to consult him upon a business of vital importance to him, and that he must see him before he went to Oatlands. As I was very anxious to know the result, particularly as at the same time there were various schemes afloat in the newspapers for new ministries, I followed him to town on Wednesday; but he was so engaged at Apsley House, that I could not see him till Friday evening, and then but for a moment. He told me, upon his word and honour, that nothing of what I saw was upon the track even of probability; but he would not say that changes were not meditating; but was on that subject far more reserved than usual; which makes me think there are. But I must tell your Lordship emphatically that he added, "I can now tell you, *for I know it,* that your friends are distinctly excluded from any chance of success, whatever change may take place. On this depend." In course of conversation, he said that the above determination, he believed, was taken in consequence of the Prince having already used his friends so ill, that no concession or recommendation on his part, could set such a compound fracture as had taken place. He then told me all the continental news I gave your Lordship yesterday.

But be these things as they may, I am certain that the indisposition at Oatlands has been favourable to Lord Wellesley's views. The Duke of Cumberland has been scarcely admitted there; and there is no good understanding between the military brethren. As the Duke of Cumberland has not from the beginning been the friend of Lord Wellesley, so, on the contrary, the Duke of York, and with good reason, has been enthusiastic in his attachment to him: an attachment not allowed to cool for want of fuel, which Culling Smith and Colonel Armstrong (both Lold Wellesley's creatures, and who have unbounded influence over both Duchess and Duke) continually keep up. Be this as it may, I saw many, lately, of the partizans of Lord Wellesley, particularly since the illness in question; and their mercury has risen exactly in proportion with the Prince's stay there.

Admiral Berkeley must now be allowed to resume his chronicle of events.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, December 15, 1811.

My dear Lord,

Our packets have been irregular, and have been so neglected ever since the great incitement to their activity (the smuggling) has been destroyed by the Treaty, that I can hardly have the conscience to charge you with bad correspondence, but I have not neglected mine, as on every opportunity which has occurred, I have not failed informing you of every transaction worthy of your notice. I hope, by this time, your acorns are arrived safe, and if you choose to imitate the hidalgos of this country, the sweet sort roasted, are nearly as good as chesnuts, and fatten them like their own pigs of Álemtejo; and I wish they would imitate their excellence, as I think they are the finest sort I have seen, and if your pig farming rage continues, I will send some to cross the breed.

We have nothing new here from the army, except that the enemy are losing by desertion, both men and officers; as only yesterday six officers and nineteen men came into Elvas, from Badajoz, who assign as a reason, the ill-treatment and want of pay (they being Germans and Poles) which the foreigners of the French army labour under. I see your papers are rather inclined to praise the wretched conduct of Blake, who certainly has occasioned the renewal of the siege of Cadiz, which Victor was raising, upon the affair of General Hill's being known. However, reports now are come (but I will not vouch for their authenticity) of Suchet's having lost near 4000 men, and obliged to abandon the siege of Valencia; and these reports come in a manner which gain more credit than the usual style of Spanish reports, which ought in general to be considered as the direct reverse of what is stated.

I had the sincere regret yesterday of attending the funeral of poor Colman, whose campaign against Sir Francis Burdett will be celebrated, when those which he served in Portugal, will not be graced with his name. He died of a fever and water on his brain. His burial even was a contest of breaking open doors, &c., as the Consul refused the Factory ground to bury him or any British officer, when no such thing as a Factory exists at present, and the moiety of the ground was the property of the Dutch Factory, which is *in nubibus*; however, it is to produce a law-suit, and the ghost of the poor Black Rod, will again be brought before the King's Bench for breaking doors, &c., *vi et armis*, as the pioneers of the regiments were ordered to clear the way, and actually battered down the gates of the cemetery. I find my sister and daughter Louisa are most likely with you at this instant, and are as happy as the noble and affectionate hospitality of the Stowe Christmas can make them.

General Leith is returned here, and has applied for his old adjutant-general, which Lord Wellington has complied with, and my George, therefore, beats his march from the 7th to the 5th division of the allied army. He almost regretted the order, which separated him from General Alten and the Light Foreign Brigade, as it was more likely to be in advance, and his friendship for Alten had commenced with his education in Hanover. However, as Alten cannot keep the division, from not being of a sufficient seniority, that part of his regret is diminished, and the admirable and perfect officer-like conduct of Leith will make him amends, as he appears to be most sincerely respected and beloved by every officer under him. We are in great expectation of hearing of changes, but I imagine the month of February must be over, before any probable change will appear. The same winds which have deprived us of news from England, have shut up the Mediterranean, and the news from Sicily, although most anxiously looked for, is still unknown.

Believe me ever to remain,
Yours most sincerely and affectionately,
G. Berkeley.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, December 22, 1811.

My dear Lord,

I have very little news to inform you of, as the armies remain much the same as they were. The Guerrillas seem to be assuming an attitude which the enemy little expected, as they now appear to act upon settled plans, and form junctions in a regular and methodical way. In consequence of an arrangement of this sort between Mina and the Empecinado, they have succeeded in the blockade of Darocca in Arragon, which has surrendered to them; and 2500 prisoners have been made. A party have likewise surprised, near Madrid, near thirty or forty of King Joseph's state mules.

I have not been very well lately; but, as it was owing to my thinking myself as equal to a party of snipe-shooting as I was twenty years ago, I deserve to suffer a little, and am glad to find that the *coup de vent* in this country has the same sort of feel which a more serious attack resembles, as I conceived at first, that a numbness of my limbs was paralytic. It is, however, gone again; and I shall take more care in future.

I have found a kind of wine which the merchants choose to call Methuen, from which you may infer it to be a brewery, which, in fact, it is, being the Red and White Lisbon mixed. It is, however, so very good, that I mean to send you and Lord Grenville some by the first good conveyance; as I will have it bottled here, and sent out in cases, as the best way. The price is enormous, as they ask me £70 a pipe, so that I shall only send a quarter cask to each. But as port wine is now £62 upon the spot, the extravagance of this cannot be much wondered at; and I think Lord Temple may rejoice at getting his in good time, when the exorbitant prices had not made their appearance.

If Louisa Harvey should be with you, pray tell her that General Leith has not been able to succeed in getting her son Edward as aide-de-camp, it being against some regulation which the Duke of Cambridge, or Cumberland, or some other royal soldier has made for the suppression of military talent in that corps. I am sorry for it, as Leith's manners and discipline would have been an acquisition to Edward's military education. My George is ordered to join his division, which, as Baron Alten will not be able to keep his present light division, to which George was attached, on the advance, he is very well content to go back to Leith, whose whole conduct and system he speaks of in the highest terms. I see in one of the papers, that Bailey, the member for Bristol, is dead; which I conceive to be a mistake, as his son, who is a very great convalescent, is mentioned in another paper, to have died at a watering-place. This, as well as many other probable events, make me as anxious as any body to hear from England, which I have not done for three weeks.

Ever yours most sincerely and affectionately,

G. Berkeley.

An additional quarrel was rather to be expected in a circle where disunion appeared the rule, and harmony the exception. The incident, therefore, mentioned in the next letter does not call for comment. It became evident from what follows that the Prince Regent had received very liberal proposals respecting the establishment of his household, from the Premier, and was quite content that he should continue in his position; and the hopeless state of the King, whose condition hardly allowed the cautious physicians to intimate the most distant prospect of his recovery, apparently gave confidence to his faithful servants in their arrangements for his deputy, and probably early successor.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, December 18, 1811.

MY DEAR LORD,

The Prince has been very bad since he arrived in town; and the pains in his arms and fingers, and for a certain time, the loss of all power in them, gave great apprehension of palsy; but yesterday he was much better, and I rather think they have frightened him about the use of such quantities of laudanum. He was expected to get out in his carriage in a day or two. There has been a complete quarrel between him and the Duke of C——, for the cause I before mentioned to you, and another subject relating to a German officer of the 15th Dragoons. The Prince has had no explanation with him, but has determined never to see him alone; and now, when he calls, the Prince always keeps somebody in the room.

All attempt at strengthening the administration is at an end: and they are to meet Parliament as they stand. The arrangement of the households and establishments is now going forward. I hear, and I think from good authority, that the King is to be removed to Kew, his establishment reduced to nothing more than is absolutely necessary for his service, as menial servants. Lord Winchelsea, the only Lord of the Bedchamber, all his equerries, and Colonel Taylor—the Queen to have her dower of £50,000 in addition to what she now has, and to maintain herself. A message afterwards to be sent down for some additional allowance to the Princesses.

The Prince to have the Civil List, and of course all the regal establishment, and his present allowances to be continued under the control of a council or commission for the liquidation of his debts, and then to cease. Such are at present the intentions—how they may vary I know not, particularly with regard to the residence of the King, as there are great differences on that point.

Poor Bishop of Oxford, I hear, is dead.

Ever, with most unfeigned attachment,

W. H. F.

P.S. You may depend upon all idea of change, *for the present,* put by. Lord Wellesley has signified his readiness to join the *Prince's* friends.

The Minister sought to gratify the Regent in every way. Here is the first indication of that improvement in the metropolis, by which the temporary title of his Royal Highness has been perpetuated. "The Prince, it is said, is to have a villa on Primrose Hill, and a fine street, leading direct from it to Carlton House. This is one of the 'primrose paths of dalliance,' by which Mr. Perceval is, I fear, finding his way to the Prince's heart."[1]

The year passed over without any important change, though a change of some kind was most certainly impending. At least, such is to be presumed from a passage in Lord Sidmouth's biography, which states that Mr. Perceval on the 12th of December, while announcing to him "that there was no foundation for the rumours respecting intended changes of the administration," availed himself of the occasion to consult his Lordship respecting the "arrangements necessary previous to the expiration of the restricted Regency." This mark of confidence was followed on the 23rd of December, by the communication of the whole plan for the final settlement of the Regency question, which Lord Sidmouth returned on the following day, accompanied by a note expressing his high approbation "of the firm and temperate manner in which Mr. Perceval had conducted that most delicate and difficult business."

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[1] Letter from Thomas Moore to Lady Donegal, October 28, 1811.—Memoirs of Thomas Moore. By Lord John Russell. Vol. I, p. 263.

The biographer then proceeds to add: "The nature of this intercourse plainly intimated what were the Minister's intentions, *provided his own official existence should be prolonged.*"[1]

The general state of affairs abroad was far from assuring, notwithstanding the nature and extent of the negotiations which the Marquis Wellesley directed. An historical writer of considerable repute thus describes their very gloomy aspect. "The systematic exertions of military monarchies and the tumultuous array of popular enthusiasm, had been alike overthrown in the strife. Little could be hoped from the former, when the heroism of Aspern had failed; nothing expected from the latter, when the devotion of Saragossa had been subdued. The hopes awakened by the retreat from Torres Vedras had been chilled by subsequent disasters; the subjugation of the east of Spain seemed to presage the speedy concentration of an overwhelming force against the battalions of Wellington in the west; and, if he succumbed, nothing remained from the shores of the Vistula to the Pillars of Hercules, capable of combating the French power, or resisting the Imperial will. A general despair, in consequence, seized upon the public mind over all Europe. Even the bravest hearts hesitated as to the ultimate issue of a contest in which former continental efforts had terminated only in disaster; and many ages of military servitude were regarded by the strongest heads as the inevitable destiny of Europe, to be overthrown, perhaps, at last, only by a fresh deluge of northern barbarians."[1]

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[1] "Life of Lord Sidmouth," Vol. III., p. 73.

It is singular that a public writer, so thoroughly conscious of this desperate state of Europe, should be so free in his censures of Lord Grenville and his political associates, for advocating a policy founded upon it. He, however, not content with thus misjudging the leaders of Opposition, claims for the members of the Government a foreknowledge of events that made them persevere when "a general despair had seized upon the public mind." This would be difficult to prove; indeed it would be far more easy to demonstrate satisfactorily, that the latter maintained the contest under the influence of hope rather than of conviction, and were more intent on their own divisions, than on sufficiently assisting the General whose genius had hitherto supported the war.

Out of this threatening horizon, however, a gleam of light was breaking that was in a short time to create a most marvellous change in the entire aspect of affairs. Ministerial jealousies and Opposition attacks, in time produced the necessary improvement, not only in the Government, but in their measures; and this wholesome effect may be traced to the introduction into the Cabinet of one Minister, who had a perfect understanding of his own duties, joined to a felicitous talent in directing his less able colleagues, without allowing them to feel their inferiority.

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[1] Alison. "History of Europe," Chapter LXVIII.

CHAPTER VI.

[1812.]

A PARTY AT HOLLAND HOUSE — THE BISHOPRIC OF OXFORD — CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRINCE REGENT AND MR. PERCEVAL — SECRET HISTORY OF A ROYAL SPEECH—THE NEW COURT PHYSICIAN—LORD CASTLEREAGH AND THE HERTFORD FAMILY——LORD GRENVILLE DECLINES HAVING ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE CABINET—OPENING OF PARLIAMENT — INDECISION OF THE PRINCE REGENT — PECUNIARY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ROYAL FAMILY.

CHAPTER VI.

The new year commenced with quite as large a crop of hopes and fears, of doubts and difficulties, as distinguished the opening of the old year. The aspect of affairs had, however, changed considerably. The prospect of a speedy abolition of the restrictions of the Regency, and of a more regal allowance, had evidently done much towards reconciling the Prince of Wales to his Ministers. Nevertheless, that constitutional indecision, or whatever it was that seemed to be continually influencing his judgment, not only kept his Royal Highness from breaking with the party with which he had been so closely connected, but apparently rendered the position of his acknowledged advisers insecure, and was no doubt one of the sources of that spirit of rivalry and intrigue which kept constantly fermenting in this very ill-kneaded mass.

In the meantime, the Opposition were not inactive. A good glimpse of the proceedings at this period at their head-quarters, Holland House, may be gathered from some of Thomas Moore's letters. To Lady Donegal, the poet writes early in January : " There is no guessing what the Prince means to do. One can as little anticipate his measures as those of Bonaparte, but for a *very different reason.* I am sure the powder in his Royal Highness's hair is much more settled than anything in his head, or indeed, heart, and would stand a puff of Mr. Perceval's much more stoutly. At the same time, I must say that there are not the same signs of his jilting Lord Moira, as there are of his deserting the rest of his party. Lord Moira is continually at Carlton House; and there was a reserve among the other statesmen at Holland House on Sunday, in talking before him, as if they considered him more in the *penetralia* of the sanctuary than themselves. It was only in groups after dinner, that they let out their suspicions on the subject."[1]

Comment, however, here becomes almost superfluous, so copious will be found the observations of spectators behind the scenes of this genteel comedy. The following report of the preparations, proves at least, that even the private rehearsals did not go off quite so pleasantly as might have been anticipated.

—— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

January 4, 1812.

My Lord,

There does not at this moment exist a doubt in the minds of Lord Wellesley, or of those more immediately attached to him, of the Prince's putting the former at the head of his government, the moment he becomes unrestricted; and this is also the opinion, openly expressed, of the individual members of the Royal Family, male and female, the Queen included.

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[1] Memoirs of Thomas Moore, Vol. i., p. 266.

The little scheme I enclosed your Lordship for the proposed double establishment to be moved for the next day of the meeting of parliament, was perfectly correct; and I am certain all parties were at that time satisfied that the money chapter was closed; but some restlessness of Mr. Perceval's upon that point, occasioned him to open it again very unexpectedly, by a fresh *projêt*, that the grant to defray the early expenses of the Regency should only extend to £100,000, instead of £150,000, as first agreed upon; which, after a severe struggle with himself, and no small bitterness towards Mr. Perceval (to whom he made use of the following strong language, "Sir, I am not afraid of your bringing the whole of my debts before the country, provided you don't misrepresent me,") he consented to take; and so the matter rests at present. But this gave Lord Wellesley the opportunity of discussing the whole arrangement afresh in the Cabinet, and of insisting upon his dissent from it *in toto* being entered up as a minute of council, where it stands at this instant.

Another curious proof of the light in which Perceval is held by the Prince, occurs in the conversation which passed respecting [the Bishopric of] Oxford. When the latter mentioned his intention of giving it to William Jackson, Mr. Perceval immediately said,

"On that point, sir, I am positively pledged."

"Positively pledged, Mr. Perceval?" said the Prince; "positively pledged to give away one of my bishoprics! I don't understand you."

On which the other replied, "I mean, that it was the

King's positive and declared intention to give it to Dean Legge."

"Mr. Perceval," said the Prince, "if I had any direct intimation of what was really the King's wishes upon the subject, I would not only make Dean Legge Bishop of Oxford, but Archbishop of Canterbury, if it were in my power; but as this is not the case, I shall make my own Bishop. And further, I desire never more to hear what were the King's wishes upon such subjects, through a third person."

I am pretty sure the above are the words of this novel colloquy between Prince and Minister, verbatim; as I heard them from, I will venture to say, *indisputable* authority.

I have heard the principal topics of the speech; who moves it in the Lords, I have not heard; those in the House of Commons are in the public papers. Its concoction and phraseology are entirely Lord Wellesley's. After taking the Prince's pleasure upon it, nearly ten days ago, Perceval prepared it with his junta, and sent a copy of it to Apsley House; when Lord Wellesley disapproved of it, both in matter and form, so much as to re-write it entirely. Upon this, so re-written, Perceval and Liverpool had a long discussion at Apsley House: but he carried every point. They then took it away, and sent it again integral as to Lord Wellesley's composition, but with an interpolation of their own, respecting the Nottingham rioters, and calling upon parliament to give the executive government every facility to protect the constitution "as by law established." Lord Wellesley immediately thought that this was a secret stab at the Catholic pretensions, and struck it out—in which alteration he has ultimately prevailed! In short, as I am told, it is a speech against which nothing objectionable can be urged, and it is *ad captandum* throughout. I must not omit, however, that it asserts the system of a great British army in the Peninsula to be absolutely essential; and that the Guerilla warfare and it mutually assist each other, and would either, separately carried on, prove inefficient and abortive. *This passage I think it would be wise to be prepared for.* There is a great deal of feeling for the King, &c. &c., and a splendid passage about Lord Wellington. This, with Batavia, &c. makes up the olio.

Something respecting the harvest is yet to be written, but what I know not. Your Lordship will hardly credit the want of *tact* of Perceval, who has not yet ventured (a mere trifle as the speech is,) to communicate to this hour upon it with the Prince! When Lord Wellesley saw him on Thursday, which he did for five hours, he complained of this, but added, "As I knew it would ultimately be in your hands, I did not care about it." Upon which Lord Wellesley repeated his part of it, word for word, from memory; with which the Prince "was delighted." He has just bestowed an extraordinary mark of his favour on Lord Wellesley, by appointing Doctor Knighton (who went to Spain with Lord Wellesley, and is entirely in his confidence) physician in ordinary. In short, I must own I think there is every probability of what this letter sets out with, taking effect.

Sunday, 5th.

In addition to what I said yesterday, I have to add, what, however, your Lordship already is doubtless acquainted with, that the restrictions are to be immediately removed, and a new Regency Bill brought in, the materials of which your Lordship is already in possession of. Some change in the arrangement of the household has also taken place, at the instance of the Chancellor, who interposed his guardianship of lunatics in some way to prevent that of which I already gave your Lordship an idea. Doctor Knighton was this morning at Carlton House. He saw McMahon, who had received Lord Wellesley's letter of thanks for the appointment. McMahon read this letter in raptures, and took occasion to state the strength of the Prince's regard towards Lord Wellesley, and added: "You may be as sure of it as of your existence, that Lord Wellesley will be at the head of the government as soon as the Prince is his own master."

The appointment of Knighton is of more consequence, I apprehend, than at first meets the eye. He is, without exception, one of the most accomplished, and by far the most insinuating man of his class or profession, and very soon obtains influence where he becomes intimate. In his quality of *accoucheur,* which, in fact, is his trade, he is now at the head of his profession, and has the key-note of every family almost, of distinction in the country.

This influence is not least at Lansdowne House, and I have great reason to think he is exerting it at this moment. His devotion to Lord Wellesley is extreme, and as the Prince has resisted Lady Melbourne and other female favourites for these last two years, in recommendations for this place—in the naming to which it seems the Prince is more particularly fastidious than to any other in his gift—the appointment of Knighton to it is looked upon as a great achievement, and likely to keep all matters steady in future. He is to be called in to-morrow, to meet Farquhar, Halford, Home and Clive, on a grand consultation at Carlton House.

Castlereagh is very unexpectedly come over. The Prince has offered India to Lord Moira, who positively refused it. Castlereagh and Melville, in any event which may take place, might either of them have it, but having both been sounded about it, have positively refused it. Lord Moira's object is known to be still the Ordnance. Lord Liverpool has given the government of Bombay to Nepean instead of to Barry Close, who was powerfully recommended by Lord Wellesley, and would have been, indeed, in every respect, far more eligible. I have seen the government paragraph for the 'Morning Post' of to-morrow, and as I believe your Lordship does not take it in, I will take care to send it. Being under *particular restraint* to day, I can add no more.

The physician mentioned in these communications, was one of the most remarkable men attached to the Court. He had attended the Marquis Wellesley during his recent mission in Spain, at whose warm recommendation the Prince of Wales took him into his service. His professional skill, however, was the least potent of Dr. Knighton's qualifications as a courtier. His general talents and graceful manners, soon attracted the admiration, and won the confidence of his Royal patron, who honoured him with the highest proofs of his regard, public and private—creating him a baronet in 1812, and appointing him Auditor of the Duchy of Cornwall in 1818. His devotion to the service of the Prince, naturally lessened his professional avocations, and a few years later he abandoned entirely his practice as a physician. At the termination of the Regency, he remained in close attendance upon the King, with the direction of his Majesty's private and domestic affairs: being in 1822, appointed Keeper of the Privy Purse, in which office he displayed much ability and tact. He was also employed in some confidential missions abroad, and appears invariably to have executed his task, however delicate and difficult, in a manner that secured the approval, both of the King and of his principal Minister. He attended his Majesty in his last illness, and died on the 11th of October, 1836. His widow subsequently published his correspondence, with an unpretending narrative.[1]

The last paragraph of the preceding communication refers to more than one person, who was shortly to take a prominent part in the arrangements and disarrangements of the present and following month. Lord Castlereagh had gained a high position in the estimation of the Prince Regent—as much, perhaps, on account of the dignity of his character, as from his knowledge of official business, and the general scope of his qualifications as a minister. One great advantage possessed by him, was entire freedom from the trammels of cliqueship. Nothing proved so embarrassing both to the Prince and to the members of his government, as rival pretensions in the Cabinet. Lord Castlereagh was known to hold an independent position; he was not tied down by engagements to advance the interests of any man or set of men, and had never damaged his prospects of office by violent opposition to the Court, or noisy abuse of the administration. During the period that had elapsed since his resignation, he had been actively employed in adding to the stores of ministerial knowledge accumulated during his active career, particularly directing his attention to continental politics, and acquiring a clear and comprehensive view of the vast chess-board of Europe, now being carefully set out for a contest of skill, of such vital interest as to throw all preceding games into the shade.

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[1] Memoirs of Sir William Knighton, Bart., G.C.H. By Lady Knighton, 1838.

It should be remembered that in his duel with Mr. Canning, his friend and relative, Lord Yarmouth, was his second; his alliance with the Hertford family may, therefore, be presumed to have been very intimate. It was not to be supposed that either he or they felt any particular predilection for his late antagonist, or for that brilliant and influential friend of his, who was known to be actively employed in endeavouring to secure his return to the Cabinet; the Hertfords were as strongly opposed to Lord Grenville, for a presumed slight Lord Yarmouth had suffered at his hands, when he held the Seals of the Foreign Office; and had reason to resent the hostile feelings towards a member of his family, which, as we shall presently show, various members of his party, had publicly exhibited. It almost necessarily follows that they would desire to bring forward Lord Castlereagh — firstly, with a view to support their own influence — secondly, to prevent the introduction into the administration of a personal opponent — lastly, to provide against any substantive change in that policy with which they desired to be identified. We are not informed whether they secured for Lord Castlereagh, private and confidential intercourse with the Prince, but there are indications in the course of this correspondence, that his Royal Highness was better acquainted with Lord Castlereagh's sentiments than his chief Minister. It appears that more than one proposal to join the administration was made to him, without success; this permits the observant reader to infer that he had a certain object in view, from which he was not to be easily diverted. He will presently see, if he does not already, what this object was. We have only to add that it was perfectly legitimate, and that the most rigid scrutiny can detect nothing in his progress towards it, inconsistent with that honourable and manly principle which was ever the active element of his career.

Lord Moira's antecedents do not promise quite so favourably for him—he was, however, and had long been more socially intimate with the Prince; and in the part he was shortly called upon to play by the command of his Royal Highness, there is nothing surprising in the striking effect of that influence upon his conduct.

The following letter shows the strong disinclination Lord Grenville still entertained to take upon himself any responsibility in the management of the very curious interests now concentrated in and about Carlton House.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, January 6, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

I arrived here on Saturday, but found nothing very new. The Prince is still very unwell, and it is much believed that the attack in his arm is paralytic. The language of his Court is that he has taken no decision, and is to take none till the 18th. This is only to put off the evil day for a few weeks longer.

I suspect the pretence about the Catholics is to be that it will be *indelicate* to do anything for them, so long as the King lives. That is very possibly, and not improbably, for fifteen or twenty years more. Will the rest of the world stand still for him? and will Ireland be as easy to be settled then, as it would even now, when it is about ten times more difficult than it was ten or twelve years ago.

I shall take an early opportunity, probably to-morrow, of protesting against one hour's more delay in that business.

That will do my business at Carlton House, if, indeed, that remained to be done. But, in fact, that was done five years ago, when I recalled Lord Yarmouth from Paris.

I am, therefore, God be thanked, out of the question. There is no misery I should dread, like that of undertaking in such a state of the court and country, any share in the government of either.

Parliament was opened with a speech, again delivered by Commission, which dwelt chiefly on the military talents of Lord Wellington, and the unsatisfactory state of our relations with the United States. The usual addresses were carried without division; but in the Upper House, Lords Grey and Grenville availed themselves of the opportunity for making a sharp attack on the policy of the Government, and in the Lower, Sir Francis Burdett indulged in one of his fiercest reform orations. The letters now printed, enter fully into details of the plots and schemes that were then maturing, at home and abroad.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, January 12, 1812.

My dear Lord,

There is nothing that has occurred since the meeting worth relating to you. All is still indecision and uncertainty with regard to the Prince, and I cannot find that even his intimates can guess what will be his final decision. He is frightened to death, and the Catholic Question coming on, does not lessen his perplexities. The object is now to make him feel that the Opposition are purposely pressing it on, in order to add to his distress. The Court language is, that the same motives which induced him to defer his decision during the malady of the King, will equally call upon him to suspend it, as long as the King lives. I think he will not have courage to make this attempt; at the same time, it is a language that comes from Carlton House. The Duke of Cumberland is still debarred all intimacy and confidence, but he is consoled by the trusteeship of Johnston's property, and is full of nothing but the borough, which he will, no doubt, by his misconduct, eventually lose to the family.

Sheridan, as usual, thought proper to come down yesterday, and make a speech for the purpose of opposing the thanks to Lord Minto, and there was no member of the old government in the House to support his (Lord Minto's) conduct. I rather suspect this was done to court Lord Wellesley, as he has stirred up the India Board in great violence against Lord Minto. Tyrrwhit and McMahon were in the House to support the thanks. Lord Chatham remains on the staff, through the influence of the Duke of Rutland, who has made it a point.

Yorke told me yesterday, he had very little hopes of the 'St. George,' and 'Defence.' Hutchinson's motion for repeal of Union, is a very abominable step, and will give great offence. They are still squabbling about the pecuniary arrangements for the Royal Family; but I believe the Queen has carried the point of keeping the King at Windsor, and remaining with him. The manner in which the grants and arrangements are to be made, are in all manner of chequered payments — first the King to have great part of his £60,000, then the Prince to pay something out of his salary, then to have some deduction from Civil List, then to be exonerated taxes; in short, it seems purposely intended to puzzle; but, perhaps, before it comes to Parliament, it will be more clear and straightforward.

Perceval has, of course, not satisfied any of them on this point. The Government, you may depend upon it, have no confidence in the Prince, and do not feel themselves secure. I should not be surprised that he turned short any moment. Adams' quitting Parliament, is, however, a very bad omen.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, January 17, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

I enclose a blank proxy, which I will enter to Fortescue. I hear nothing more of Carlton House politics. He will end in disgusting all parties, but in leaving himself at the mercy of Perceval. He has taken this precise moment to dine in Downing Street, being his first going out after his illness.

There is an end of all coalitions on the continent. Prussia has declared against Russia; and the supposition is that Bonaparte will attack the latter. He has already above 120,000 men on the Elbe. In this state, Austria must think herself too happy if he allows her to be neuter.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

January 18, 1812.

Many thanks for your letter. What you mention about the establishments is confirmed to me from other quarters. The other is quite new to me.

I inclose the draught of our motion. If Eldon and Perceval accede to it, they cannot, you will see, afterwards oppose on the No Popery ground, as the words I have used pledges the House to the question *on,* and only reserve the *quo modo.*

Yorke has certainly resigned *for all cases* and *in all events.* Overtures have been made to Bragge [Bathurst] and Vansittart; but as these do not as yet include Sidmouth and Bucks [Earl of Buckinghamshire], nothing is, I believe, arranged.

The Prince will find himself in a curious situation if he quarrels with Perceval just now, with the temper that is grown up in the present Opposition.

Return my paper.

Your intelligence will make me defer for a day or two longer, the communicating words of the motion to Lord Liverpool.

On the 16th of January, Mr. Perceval addressed the House of Commons on the hopeless state of the King, and recommended the establishment of the Royal Household at an expense to the country of £180,000 a-year, with an additional grant of £100,000 for the expense the Prince Regent had incurred since he had assumed the reins of Government. Some severe remarks were made in reply; but the motion for a Bill to be brought in, was agreed to without a division. During the passage of the Bill, the Minister was more than once attacked on the extravagance of these arrangements, at a period of extraordinary distress. Subsequently, additions were made to these grants.

CHAPTER VII.

[1812.]

THE MINISTER'S EXTRAVAGANT PROPOSALS FOR THE CIVIL LIST—SECRET HISTORY OF HIS ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE PRINCE REGENT—THE CATHOLIC CLAIMS—INTRIGUES AT COURT—THE ENGLISH ALLIANCE WITH RUSSIA—PRUSSIA AND FRANCE—BERNADOTTE AND NAPOLEON—THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY'S FOREIGN POLICY—SICILY AND LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK—THE QUEEN OF NAPLES—A ROYAL THRESHING MACHINE—POZZO DI BORGO, AND THE PRINCE REGENT—CHANGES AT THE COURT OF NAPLES.

CHAPTER VII.

The ensuing communications convey the whole history of the Minister's progress to favour, by means of his financial operations, and the rival projects of the Marquis Wellesley and Mr. Perceval, to recommend themselves at the expense of the nation. They also afford a glimpse of the Council Chamber, not less instructive. The development of Lord Wellesley's foreign policy, will be found the most remarkable feature in the narrative.

—— TO EARL TEMPLE.

January 17.

The narrative which I proposed to send your Lordship this day, I must again suspend, as the *dénouement* which I thought had taken place, is yet to come; and all is, by a very curious circumstance once more thrown into confusion. Mr. Perceval, wrote yesterday (18th) to Lord Wellesley, enclosing him a paper formed upon the principal arrangements stated in my note of last night, stating to him at the same time that he (Perceval) was extremely anxious for his concurrence in the measure, in order that he might be able to inform the Prince that the proposed terms were perfectly agreeable to him (Lord Wellesley), and that he himself (Perceval) might feel that they were so, and further required this concurrence in writing. This Lord Wellesley positively refused, adding that Mr. Perceval must be well aware that the paper in question was one of compromise between what the Prince wanted and had a right to, and what Perceval would concede; that he had all along combatted almost every point of its contents; and that at last he had merely assented to the whole merely for the sake of unanimity, and to avoid embarrassing the Prince's government, which would otherwise be the case if he resolutely maintained his own opinions; and that certainly he would not now record his assent to what he had all along expressed his marked disapprobation of." *This* was in writing; and, on their meeting afterwards at Carlton House in the course of the day, Perceval flew out excessively, and said he would come to an open decision upon it in the Cabinet. This, Lord Wellesley said, was what he always had wished and suggested; but it had been uniformly evaded; but now he insisted in his turn upon its taking place. Accordingly, a Cabinet was summoned for this day at one o'clock, the result of which your Lordship shall know, please God, to-morrow.

I shall here give, from memory, for I was not allowed to take it down in writing, the state in which the double establishment will be, agreeably to the recent arrangements.

Present Civil List	£900,000
King's Privy Purse	60,000
	960,000
Deduct proposed Establishment for the King .	160,000
	£800,000

Prince's Exch. Income . . .	£125,000	
Duchy, &c.	12,000	
	137,000	
Fund set apart for debts . .	87,000	
Added by Prince to Civil List. . . .		£50,000
Prince's Privy Purse annual . . .		60,000
		£910,000

King's Income	£960,000
Prince's proposed ditto	910,000
Prince's less than the King's	£50,000

Grant from Parliament, 1812—£150,000 to defray early expenses of Regency, present incumbrances, &c., and nothing new in the shape of annual charge, save the interest thereon, and the £60,000 annually for Privy Purse.

I never in my life witnessed such irritation as there is on one side, and by what I can hear and rely on, on the other; and I must *still* think that if Opposition preserve their present compactness, the Prince of necessity must apply to them, I greatly fear, in opposition to his wishes and feelings.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

January 21, 1812.

Perhaps a worse speech was never delivered in Parliament than that of Mr. Perceval on bringing in the Royal Household Bill; and his attempt to reply to Ponsonby, Tierney, and Sheridan, was equally bad, nor had he any assistance whatever. The oldest members in the House declare they never saw a Minister so confused, feeble, or inadequate to his public duty as he was on that night, nor were any of his most violent opposers better pleased upon that occasion than were the Prince and Lord Wellesley. I do not know whether throughout my correspondence with your Lordship I gave the history of the above proposition throughout, and it is now gone by so far, as to be hardly worth while; but I think it will be useful to state, that Perceval's first proposition was not to give any additional grant nor permanent charge whatever, but to limit the double establishment to the £960,000, the existing income of the King. That of the Prince, conveyed through Adam, was to revive the claims for the Cornish arrears, &c., and demand their amount at the opening of the Session as of right, being somewhat above £700,000, and as an excuse for which to open the subject of the old debts of his Royal Highness, compromised or liquidated in part, by the Commission appointed for that purpose, at which Lord Cholmondeley presided. To this Lord Wellesley gave his decided negative, alleging that it would produce everlasting outcry against the Prince; but proposed, as a middle term, the fairly bringing the Prince's existing incumbrances before Parliament, amounting to £525,000, and throwing himself upon it for the entirely disembarrassing him.

Your Lordship will believe that this last idea (whether wise in itself or not I do not presume to determine,) was infinitely more grateful to the Prince than Perceval's *projet*; but Lord Wellesley stood alone, and the mode since pursued, although infinitely distasteful to the Regent, was adopted—Lord Wellesley, at the earnest request of the Prince, giving it no other opposition than obliging Perceval to draw up his dissent, and recording it as a minute of Council. That the Prince should so interfere is only to be accounted for by his apprehension of Government being broken up before the restrictions were taken off, or expired; an event which those about him declared would, should it take place, make him as —— as his father!

With respect to the King's household, Lord Wellesley was also counteracted by the Chancellor, who insisted upon throwing into the Queen's hands all the power, patronage, &c., which, in an ordinary case, the wife of any other lunatic should possess. The Council followed the Chancellor, and Lord Wellesley again stood alone, but the Prince was entirely with him. So far I have endeavoured to account for Perceval's embarrassment, who feeling conscious of wanting support in the highest quarter, lost all that overbearing fierceness, which he would otherwise have given scope to.

Upon this subject I have only to add that, on the above evening, such was his want of confidence as to make him cautious of pressing his resolutions, as he had at first intended, fearful of being left in a minority. In short, it seems on all hands agreed that his reign as Minister is at an end, at the same time that it is generally *felt* that such is his self-confidence and presumption, that were he offered the Chancellorship and a peerage, he would break up the Government rather than forego his present situation.

What then is to be the result of the present disturbed state of our councils? I conceive, and am, indeed, morally certain, a separation, and that upon the ground of the Catholic claims. That the Prince thinks he has been unkindly treated by that body in their late proceedings, he declares upon every occasion, and loudly; but the inclination to serve them, and his belief in its policy, exists in as great force as ever. In this he is fortified by Lord Wellesley's avowed opinion, which I shall give in as few words as possible. He says, "the difference between Mr. Perceval and me upon the present system, is that he thinks the existing disabilities are beneficial to the state, and necessary to be maintained as so many safeguards to its well-being and existence; on the contrary, I have always considered them as evils in themselves, and which sooner or later must endanger it, if persisted in. He, of course, wishes their continuance—I their abolition. But the mode of getting rid of a system which has obtained for such a length of time, is, I profess, a difficulty of no common weight and magnitude."

Your Lordship sees in this avowal, that the principle of action is common both with Lord Wellesley and the Prince; in point of fact, he discussed the whole question in an audience of six hours with him on Thursday last, much I apprehend to the satisfaction of the Prince, who repeatedly cried out during its continuance, "admirable; this will do, my dear Lord. My own sentiments exactly;" and it broke up apparently to the high satisfaction of both parties. The evening before, (Wednesday) Lord Wellesley, in a Cabinet, detailed his whole views upon the subject, and the result was a feeling upon his mind, that he should ultimately be supported by Lords Camden, Westmoreland, Mulgrave, and Melville, nor should he be much surprised if by the Chancellor, who was not a little fluctuating; but Perceval was immmovable, and warmly supported by Liverpool and Lord Bathurst, Yorke, and Ryder.

On Friday *I was in council,* to know what would satisfy the Catholics? "Would they take the emancipation piecemeal, or would they accept it only entire? If in the latter case, would they concede a negative power in the making of bishops, to the crown, nor meddle with the Chancellorship or Lord Keeper? Supposing the law, army, and revenue were now opened to them, would they defer a provision for their clergy, and seats in Parliament to another (perhaps the next) Session?"

I would not presume to trouble your Lordship with anything that I said; in fact, I know no more of what the Catholics really want—I mean in the degree—than the most ignorant individual in the country, having never held any correspondence of a nature to inform me on that head, with Ireland, since they forced their best friends out of the King's Councils; but I think the following deductions may fairly be made from what I have stated: First—that the Prince has made up his mind to the amelioration of the condition of the Catholics, in a very material degree, if not totally, as the first act of his Government; secondly—that the present Government will come to an irreparably wide breach upon this question; and, lastly—that as Perceval will remain firm (at least it is my conviction that he will), the Prince will have to choose between Lord Wellesley and the miserable portion of the Government who will adhere to him, and Opposition, as to his future Minister.

Of the possibilities of Lord Wellesley's making a Government, supposing him to be authorized to set about it, your Lordship is infinitely a better judge than I can be—of somewhat which passed through his mind, and I should suppose through the Prince's, upon that subject, it may be useful to know. Just five days before the meeting of Parliament, the Prince suddenly asked Lord Wellesley, "would you have any objection to shake hands with Lord Grenville?" to which Lord Wellesley replied, "certainly not; that public measures had separated them, but that he ever had, and ever would have, the greatest private regard for him."

On the night of the opening of the Session, the tenor of Lord Grenville's speech, however, greatly disconcerted him

(Lord Wellesley). Not that part of it which related to the Catholics, but that which touched on our mode of carrying on the war in Spain, and the subject of America. Upon those points, particularly the former, Lord Wellesley is entirely made up. On that evening, too, the Duke of Cumberland, who had not spoken for a considerable period to Lord Wellesley, came up to the latter as soon as Lord Grenville had done speaking, and exclaimed to him triumphantly: "Well, my Lord, I always knew you had a hankering after your old friend Grenville—what do you say to him now?"[1]

These circumstances would not be worth repeating, did they not denote a foregone conclusion upon certain points of coalition, in the minds of many. All speculation of that kind is now, however, quite at an end. Up to last Saturday, it had never been proposed, even in the most distant manner, to Lord Wellesley to form a Government, he, therefore, has never set up any standard of his own.

Canning is in his hands. He builds upon that separation of the present cabinet in his favour, to which I have already adverted. I do not observe that any inroad upon Opposition is meditated, save in the person of Whitbread, whose objects are, high office for himself, and the Peerage for his wife. The Sidmouths, the Prince never will employ, having the greatest personal dislike to their chief. Of the Prince's attachment to himself, Lord Wellesley makes no doubt, and on this is his sole dependance. Indeed, his influence over him is hourly increasing, of which many proofs might be given; and all the people about the Prince are entirely in his interests. Through the Hertfords he is sure of Castlereagh; and this is the whole of his battle front, should he be called to the chief command. For the rest, having adopted as the ground-work all the Prince's views and politics, both *foreign* and *domestic*, he is willing to act with any man or set of men, provided they will serve under him, and join him in his views respecting the war in the Peninsula, to which point alone he would confine himself, in the event of an union with those who thought widely different from him in other respects.

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[1] This impression Lord Grenville intended to create, by his speech. See his letter of January 6th.

This vivid photograph of Downing Street, produced by one who, it is evident, had access to the Council Chamber, is one of the most remarkable of those startling pictures of ministerial life, that have come from the same source. The reader will not fail to observe the perfect understanding that appears to exist between the Marquis Wellesley and the Prince Regent; the apparent desire of the Prince for the accession of Lord Grenville to the Cabinet, and the presumed inclination of his Royal Highness to favour the Catholics; but of these appearances, much as the well-informed writer relied upon them, it is difficult to determine which was the most fallacious. It is not improbable that the admiration and respect with which the Prince must have regarded Lord Grenville, may have influenced his Royal Highness to wish rather than to expect to win that accomplished statesman to his service, notwithstanding the care that some ultra-Whig writers have taken to represent his being an object of insurmountable dislike in that quarter. This, however, at least, is certain: the Wellesley preference had set in with much too strong a tide to be lasting, and that brilliant but somewhat imprudent minister was never so insecure of his anticipated leadership, as when his royal master poured into his ear his confidence and his commendation.

Now for as luminous a view of foreign politics.

Circumstances of a prudential nature arising from my being for this week past in the same house *with a particular friend,* prevented my writing before this moment to your Lordship, being the first disengaged one I have had or could make for the purpose. I was, however, the more reconciled to the delay, as I had ascertained that, on the evening of Lord Wellesley's leaving town, he had left the most precise directions with Colonel Hamilton that your Lordship should have the earliest intelligence of the expected Lisbon mails. I shall now proceed to lay before your Lordship such information as I could gather with respect to foreign affairs, and afterwards their application to our domestic concerns.

First as with regard to Russia—our relations with her, and our good understanding, are every hour approximating to an avowed alliance. Luberminski, Alexander's accredited agent at our Court, took his leave of the Prince, on Thursday, the 8th inst., when the latter expressed his full satisfaction at every part of his conduct, and, in the moment of his departure, expressed his hope that he might speedily return in a character which would allow of his giving him the most public proofs of regard and favour. The awkward circumstance of the return of *our transports* laden with military stores for the service of Russia, arose from the narrow and obstinate policy of Mr. Perceval, who insisted that they should be so conveyed, on account of economy; and that, as the stores were a boon from this country, Russia would admit them in the present crisis in British bottoms, and thus establish the principle of intercourse once more. Lord Wellesley stood alone in the Cabinet in recommending that they should be sent in American, or by any other conveyance than our own; as, by adopting the latter method, we would force Russia into what we were endeavouring to keep back, namely, a premature act of aggression against France; and absolutely predicted what actually took place. The return was, however, accompanied by the most conciliatory and satisfactory communication from the Emperor.

Prussia retains and even augments her hostile preparations against Bonaparte. The latter, about two months back, demanded in the most imperious manner, the reasons why she had armed, and was so intent in putting her yet remaining fortresses in thorough repair. Prussia replied that she did so in conformity to every principle of public and acknowledged policy, as it was only in consequence of every power around her having already armed, and actually put their troops in motion in every direction. Bonaparte replied that his keeping his forces, and those of Westphalia and Saxony on foot, was owing to the uncertain issue of a pending negociation with Russia, of which, however, there was every hope of a favourable termination; that he disclaimed any measure injurious to the true interests of Russia, and therefore demanded, in return for this most condescending explanation, an immediate disarming, &c., on her part. This, Prussia, within this month, has positively refused, asserting that she would resort to every extremity rather than by a desertion of her just rights, sacrifice her remaining independence. Thus matters stand in this quarter; in the meantime, we have actually sent, and they have been received, 50,000 stand of arms to that power, with ammunition, and every species of equipment proportioned thereto. Prussia still continues indefatigable in increasing her magazines, depots, and every species of military equipment, and has now eight fortresses in a condition to hold out the most vigorous siege. It is a curious circumstance that every Prussian officer of rank who persisted in the fashionable practice of keeping up a tender intercourse with French women, is either unemployed, or has been put on some remote and degrading duty.

Your Lordship is not, perhaps, aware of very active negociations existing between us and Bernadotte. Such, however, is the case, and either our Government is egregiously deceived, or he will be one of the most active of the new confederates now coalescing for the purpose of checking the further encroachments of his old friend and master, Bonaparte. There is an interchange of agents between Stockholm and London, and our people look upon him as a sure card in the great game they are about to play. Denmark persists in her sullen but bitter hostility to us, and, of course, in her alliance with France; and what is worse, this sentiment pervades both prince and people, which, after all that has taken place between both countries, is not much to be wondered at. Of the co-operation of Austria, in the event of hostilities in the North, ministers have every moral certainty.

From the above premises, all that can put Bonaparte's power and projects once more into peril is confidently augured by Lord Wellesley, and his immediate confidential friends, nor is the Prince himself less sanguine; and so far is he instepped into this new system, that he never suffers a paper or a despatch to remain unread one moment after he receives it, and works upon them with Lord Wellesley for three and four hours at a time. What is more curious is, that being constantly told that this great expected change in the affairs of Europe is entirely owing to his own enlarged views, firmness, and magnanimity, he now firmly believes it, and upon every occasion which presents itself, gives himself credit for all that has and will come to pass. In this flattering view of things he is more confirmed by what is going on in the south of Europe, to which I am now to call your Lordship's attention.

And first as to Sicily. Lord W. Bentinck's return had for its ostensible object the opening the eyes of Government here as to the real situation of that country. In the first place, he asserts that the Court (or, in other words, the Queen and her advisers) have no leaning to, or correspondence with Bonaparte—on the contrary, hold him in the utmost abhorrence—but, at the same time, are determined to resist that spirit of interference and control, but too much manifested by every class and rank of British in the island, in the interior government of the country—bad it must be allowed—but whose conduct and policy they insist should be entirely independent of us. Army, navy, and commercial, are equally obvious to the above complaint, and Lord William says had any set of foreigners in this country taken such liberties, even of speech, they would be turned out under the Alien Act instantly; but superadded to the above, the two people who have done most mischief are Fagan, the Consul-General, a hot-headed Irishman, and more than suspected of republicanism, who has done everything in his private and public capacity to outrage the existing government of Sicily. In his colourable statement of mercantile grievances, out of twenty-four cases, Lord William found eighteen absolutely false in fact and inference, and the remaining six trivial to the last degree. He is of course to come home. But in the higher circles the mischief created originates, to use Lord William's own words, "in the busy vanity and active ostentation" of Lord Valentia.

This person, who has been stimulating the nobility to actual revolt, had teased Lord Wellesley into giving him a sort of confidential mission to the Seven Islands and the adjacent continent, stopped short at Palermo, and, affecting to be the bosom friend of Lord W——, employed himself in fomenting to the utmost of his power the disputes between the court and the people. He is, of course, on his way home at this moment, with no increase of reputation of any sort, having, it is more than whispered, indulged himself openly in propensities of which he was only suspected at home. What it is that Lord William has asked of the Government in order to put matters to rights there I am totally ignorant of; but he has got all that he asked, and, on his taking leave of Lord Wellesley, thanked the latter for having saved Sicily. The Prince was very gracious to Lord William, and highly approved, led thereto by Lord Wellesley, of his return; but I am to state to your Lordship that, on this occasion, Lord Wellesley stood alone—all his colleagues disapproving highly his return, as being an anomaly in respect of his diplomatic character, and highly questionable in respect of his military command; and in this view of it, their discountenance of him still continues.

The following anecdotes may amuse your Lordship. On Lord William's first going to the opera at Palermo, on his entering the house it rang again with *evvivas*, which continued till the arrival of the King and Queen, when something of a very opposite nature took place. This was repeated two or three times, when an order was publicly issued, that no plaudits of any kind, except those professionally directed, should take place. The consequence of this order was its marked disobedience, and Lord William was obliged, for the remainder of his stay, to avoid going to the opera, or indeed any other public place.

Lord William describes the Queen as one of the cleverest persons, male or female, he ever met with. She is at once polite sarcastic, dignified, and insolent—in short, a very unmanageable lady-like woman. She told Lord William, the second time of seeing him, that she perfectly comprehended the views of England; for that "*toute la philosophie de M. Drummond, la révérence de Milord Amherst, et la bonhomie de Milord Bentinck,*" had one and the same object, that of getting the Government into the hands of their own country. When Valentia brought her his "Travels," she said to him: "Your Lordship has written a huge book, indeed. I never saw so wide and beautiful a margin, such admirable paper, or such exquisite printing," and that it did great honour to the London tradesmen. But not a word did the mortified author hear of its literary merit. All this was said in full assembly, and in a manner insulting, Lord William says, beyond description, and produced its full effect upon the noble author.

Your Lordship does not, I believe, know anything of Lord William in the character of a *diseur de bons mots*; but I think he uttered one of the very best a few day's back at Lord Wellesley's. Castelcicala was there by appointment to meet Lord Wellesley. Your Lordship knows that Castelcicala, formerly an advocate, is one of the most subtle and clever of the whole *corps diplomatique*. He further speaks and writes English perfectly. The party were discussing the characters of the King and Queen of Naples, and particularly the agricultural turn of the former, when Lord Wellesley adverting to the *trait,* asked Lord William, if he was carrying over some of our improved farming implements, in order to gratify the royal taste and curiosity that way. To which Lord William replied, fixing his eyes earnestly upon Castelcicala, "Oh, yes, my Lord, I am going to carry his Majesty out a *threshing machine.*" The rage of Castelcicala, his suppressed anger, and Italianized grin of anger and chagrin, blended with his eagerness to appear pleased, I am told mocked all description; nor was his chagrin lessened by the bursts of laughter, in which the Foreign Secretary indulged upon this occasion.

But along with the *ostensible* motive for the return of Lord W. Bentinck, there exists another, far more important, beneath the cards, of which the public are very little aware; and that is, he is able to force personal communications in that part of the world, to ascertain not only the feasibility, but the actual organization of an insurgency extending from the Tyrol, inclusive even to Naples, embracing the whole of Italy, and which only waits the moment of hostilities commencing in the North, to break out in a manner the most alarming and tremendous to the present Government of those countries. Of this projected rising, by everything I can hear, it will be far more menacing to France, than even that of Spain; being more universal, as embracing every rank and description of the people, but under far better and more experienced leaders. What will most surprise your Lordship is that Perceval has actually given the money that was asked of us, and even with a great degree of cheerfulness.

Of this project, I suspect, *Pozzo di Borgo,* whose description and character I already gave your Lordship, to be the projector and main spring—he has been agitating it for more than three years; and is sanguine as to its success. He has seen the Prince thrice—the first time for nearly three hours, during which time, so well had the Prince prepared himself, as to astonish the Italian, with the masterly view he took of the situation of Europe, and what steps might still be taken for its rescue and salvation. And he departed from his audience I hear, amazed and delighted with the sagacity, talents, and acquirements of the Regent.

I repeat once more to your Lordship, that nothing can exceed the enthusiasm with which this last-named personage has entered into his grand continental scheme, and it is upon that enthusiasm, contrasted with the known and avowed policy of those whose views are limited to the system of husbanding our resources, that those hopes are founded of individual ambition which I have so often pictured to your Lordship.

Among the names of European celebrity connected with the more brilliant one of Napoleon, was Charles André, born at "Pozzo di Borgo," near Ajaccio in Corsica, which subsequently became his appellation. He was not only born in the same island, but in the same year with Bonaparte, and being connected with one of its most ancient families, whilst the Bonapartes had recently settled, and were of Italian origin, there existed a rivalry between them, which influenced Charles and Napoleon in their youth, and considerably affected their several careers. When the former was acting as Secretary to the Corsican Noblesse in 1789, he was sent as their deputy to the National Assembly, where he connected himself with the Girondists, till his return to Corsica, when he was associated with Paoli, in its government. But in this employment they did not remain long undisturbed by the more active republicanism of the Bonapartes, by whom they probably would soon have been overpowered, had not the appearance of the English fleet, expelled from Toulon, allowed them an opportunity of seeking the protection and interposition of Great Britain. Corsica was declared independent, and Pozzo di Borgo appointed President of the Assembly. The power of the Bonapartes was, however, not to be so easily disposed of—two years formed the limit of the new order of things; at the end of which, Paoli, and Pozzo di Borgo escaped in an English frigate to *Elba*, whence the latter found his way to London, where he gained an introduction to Pitt; and Lord Grenville, the Foreign Secretary, entrusted him with employment of a diplomatic character that took him to Vienna. He soon afterwards passed into the service of the Emperor Alexander of Russia, who sent him on a diplomatic mission to Naples. He returned to St. Petersburg on the peace of Presburg, and was employed both in a military, and in a diplomatic capacity, till the peace of Tilsit, when he prudently sought permission to travel. He went to Vienna, where he contrived to exercise considerable influence in the Austrian cabinet, but his hereditary rival, after the battle of Wagram, insisted on his banishment from Austria. He now proceeded to England by a circuitous route, and reached London in the autumn of 1810.

He found the Perceval administration in the place of that of Mr. Pitt; but though both his former patrons were now powerless to serve him, and the Minister could not appreciate his capabilties, with that peculiar instinct by which men of genius find their way to minds of a like character, he contrived to make the acquaintance of a distinguished statesman, who, though at this period unemployed, was quietly waiting his time when the rashness of his political rivals, and an increasing confidence in the highest quarter, in his ability and integrity, should place him in a position to avail himself of such valuable assistance. In the mean time, he forwarded the views of his friend, by obtaining access for him to Carlton House, and, to the residence of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Marquis Wellesley). Frequent private communications made Lord Castlereagh thoroughly acquainted with the state of the German nations; and no doubt, through M. Pozzo di Borgo, the English government were more fully made aware, than through the ordinary channels, of the secret feelings and sentiments of those sovereigns who shortly afterwards, under the direction of the mind thus inspired, coalesced to form the grand alliance which effected so extraordinary a change throughout Europe.

In this year, (1812), the Czar engaged in a life and death struggle with Napoleon, recalled M. Pozzo di Borgo to his councils; and thenceforward, these brilliant examples of Corsican genius, exhibited their ancient rivalry with increasing advantage on the part of the latter, till the other, in his turn, was content to find a temporary refuge at Elba.[1]

Among the varied materials that compose the mosaic of Russian glory, Barclay de Tolly must always hold a distinguished place. He was of Scottish descent, and was the son of a Livonian priest, in which province he was born in 1755. Having entered the Russian army at twelve years of age, he had the advantage, at an early period of life, of having seen much military service, in various campaigns against the Turks, Swedes, and Poles. He became a colonel in 1798, and having greatly distinguished himself in the Polish war of

[1] Capefigue. Diplomates Européens.

1807, rapidly obtained promotion; and concluded a brilliant series of services by the daring and brilliant feat, in 1809, of passing an army with all its heavy ordnance and cavalry, across the ice of the Gulf of Bothnia, in the depth of winter; which enabled Russia to triumph over Sweden. These displays of military skill soon after raised him to the supreme command of the armies of the Czar, and to the appointment of Minister at War. So responsible a position was rendered more onerous by the great events which were then impending, and necessitated the supervision and direction of preparations on a scale hitherto unknown even in that vast empire, to meet the shock with which it was menaced by the prodigious power which had already overrun the fairest portion of Europe. A contest with the immense warlike resources of France, guided by the extraordinary military genius of Napoleon, was a contingency from the contemplation of which the boldest mind might have shrunk; but Count Barclay de Tolly, encouraged by the confidence of his imperial master, and assisted by the experience of one of the best commanders in the service of Prussia, General von Phull, gave all his energies to the gigantic task; and shortly placed the war establishment of the empire on a footing that must have commanded the respect of its formidable enemy—then actively seeking its destruction.

There can be few spectacles more imposing, none more worthy of sympathy and respect, than the efforts of a nation to repel an invader; and it was not likely to lose any of its grandeur, when observed from a position which had for years been menaced by the same aggressive power. Englishmen, therefore, watched the preparations that preceded the impending strife, with a deep and earnest interest, which soon led to cordial offers of assistance, and a desire to take a part in the struggle. The names of Pozzo di Borgo and Barclay de Tolly, were not unfrequently heard in conversation, and quoted in the correspondence of able men of all parties; and in the warmth of their admiration of the proceedings at St. Petersburg, they forgot the very questionable conduct of its Emperor, from the unprincipled appropriations at Tilsit, to his first waking from the feverish dream which the secret articles of that indefensible treaty had created. There was a bond of union in their mutual defiance of the great conqueror; and on this the statesman who directed the Foreign Affairs of the English government, placed a sure reliance for obtaining the means of affording encouragement and assistance to Russia. He entertained views beyond this—the prospect of a new coalition to restrain the ever encroaching policy of the French Emperor, floated before his mind like a brilliant meteor, dazzling, illusory, and unsubstantial—founded on the remote probability of the failure of that grand effort to annihilate the empire of the Czar, which it was well known Napoleon was contemplating. The German Princes were likely to be anxious spectators of the contest; most of them appeared desirous of swelling the train of the powerful Emperor of France;

but this, it was believed, was the result of fear, rather than of affection—a single disaster was expected to change these servile courtiers into vindictive combatants. Notwithstanding the conviction that the issue must be in the hand of Providence, many persons allowed their hopes to influence their judgment, and looked forward to the triumph of Russia ; but the better informed, as to the materials with which the French Emperor worked, and the nature of his successes over the armies of Germany, gloomily anticipated the conquest of the last and greatest of the German Powers, as preliminary to the long deferred overwhelming attack which was to leave England as prostrate as the rest of Europe.

It is necessary to take the reader from the contemplation of these ministerial expositions, to the still more disturbed Court of the King and Queen of Naples, where a game equally hazardous was being played.

ADMIRAL FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Palermo, January 23, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,

You will, I am sure be glad, to hear of the changes that have taken place here within the last week. The Queen, after threatening to resist all the demands of Lord William Bentinck, and not having the means, has been obliged to submit. The King has named the hereditary Prince, Regent for a time, on account of his ill state of health, and resides at the Fientza, about thirty miles from this place. The Queen has left the Palace, and lives at Santa Croce, a mile from the town. Only a few days preceding this temporary abdication, the Minister for Foreign Affairs sent a note to Lord William Bentinck, expressing his determination to keep two of the Ministers that were obnoxious, and naming also four new Councillors of State decidedly hostile to us. This was the crisis; and Lord William Bentinck resolved to leave Palermo and use force. The embarkation of 3000 men at Melazzo gave the alarm to the Court; and Lord William was requested to countermand the troops, the King having adopted the measure I have before mentioned.

Hitherto (a week) the acts of the Hereditary Prince have been wise. He is, I understand, entirely attached to the alliance with England. Already has he named Lord William Bentinck Captain-General of his army, and General McFarlane second. The Barons are released from their confinement, and he has withdrawn the decree of the one per cent, which has been levied without the consent of the Parliament. All this looks well, and, provided the Queen does not retain her influence over the mind of the Prince, all will probably go on right; but, to my judgment, she is much too near Palermo; and I am informed, she continues her intrigues with those who are considered most inimical to the English. She had the wickedness to tell the Princess d'Archi, wife of one of the Barons, that she had no concern with the imprisonment of her husband, but that it was done by the desire of the Hereditary Prince. In short, I believe the woman is wicked and mad enough to do anything.

I think not many weeks or days will elapse before we have some British troops in the neighbourhood of Palermo; and the return of the Barons will give a great turn to our affairs. They (the Barons) are very popular. Bellomonte and Villa Ermosa are expected to-morrow night from Trapani. Everybody is going out to meet them. There is not such a thing as a house to be hired in the town. It has been suggested that it would be more agreeable to the Hereditary Prince, as well as to the English Minister, that they should come into town quite privately; but such is their popularity, that they will, I think, be well attended.

I am going on Sunday with Lord William, to Messina, to look at the works there, and also to see something about the flotilla. I have not heard yet what is meant to be done about their Marine; it is in such a disorganized state, and subject to such ignorant people, that nothing less than a radical reform can make it useful to us; indeed, there does not appear the means to keep more than a large flotilla; but this is the sort of force that we are most in want of. Hitherto, I believe, there has been little communication with the government upon it. I have been asked to give an opinion as to what alterations it requires; but I see plainly that nothing can be done beneficial, without the whole of the system being changed; this, I fancy, will not be the case; nor do I think myself, that Lord William is at all *disposed* to give the commanding officer of the navy any influence over the Sicilian marine. The army have the entire control of the flotilla at Messina, kept up at an enormous expense; and I have reason to believe he will not urge what I conceive might hereafter be very serviceable to our projects in this country. I hope we may not differ on this subject; but I feel that if it is advantageous placing the military force under the control of the English General, the same mode of reasoning will apply *more* to the Marine, and prevent improper communications with the continent.

27th. Yesterday I was in a fever all day; it was blowing a hurricane from the eastward; two transports were drove on shore; and the 'Epervier' lost her masts; I was fearful for the 'Milford,' in her exposed situation, but the ground and cables I knew were good. Our voyage has been delayed until the arrival of some British troops in the neighbourhood;

I fancy some will be placed near the town, to keep in awe both Sicilians and Neapolitans, who are very ill inclined to each other. All the Barons are returned, and the Hereditary Prince has been unwell two days; I think and hope all will go on well. I have now my fears for the ships at Melazzo, where the 'Achilles' was at anchor with the transports.

The Duke of Leinster, with his brother, are here; they are very fine young men. Lord Malpas has changed his religion, and has engaged to marry Miss Campbell, the daughter of General Campbell, at Gibraltar. She is only fifteen; it is said the brother of the young lady is coming here; and that when he (Lord Malpas) made his promise of marriage, he also gave under his hand, to bring this young man into Parliament. Lord and Lady Montgomerie, and Mr. and Mrs. Orby Hunter, are here also. You will read all the news from the Adriatic; I hope to be allowed to look at the ships there in the spring; and I am very desirous of getting the Sicilians released from Tunis and Tripoly; this is no very easy matter at present; but the appearance of two ships of the line might do much.

T. F. F.

CHAPTER VIII.

[1812.]

A CABINET DISCUSSION—THE CATHOLIC QUESTION CONSIDERED BY THE PRINCE REGENT AND HIS COUNSELLORS—MARQUIS WELLESLEY DECLARES HIS DISINCLINATION TO SERVE ANY LONGER UNDER MR. PERCEVAL—THE PRINCE REGENT AND HIS RIVAL MINISTERS—THE SCHISM IN THE CABINET—LORD SIDMOUTH'S APPROACHES TO OFFICE —PROPOSAL FROM THE PRINCE REGENT TO THE OPPOSITION—MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE'S OPINION OF ITS DISINGENUOUS CHARACTER—LORD GRENVILLE'S OPINION OF IT—REPLY OF LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY—CONDUCT OF THE DUKE OF YORK IN THE NEGOCIATION—MR. PERCEVAL DIRECTED TO FORM A GOVERNMENT—RESIGNATION OF MARQUIS WELLESLEY—SECRET HISTORY OF THESE TRANSACTIONS.

CHAPTER VIII.

It will presently be seen that the plot was thickening —not but what it might be considered to have for some time attained consistency sufficient for any ordinary plot. The month of February, however, proved that there were other materials to be mixed up in it, and they were duly amalgamated after the formula revealed in the remarkable communications now laid before the reader, who, it is hoped, will not pass unnoticed, the very characteristic reference to Lord Castlereagh, and the *piquante* estimate of Lord Sidmouth—minds as far as the poles asunder in their acquirements.

—— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Feb. 1, 1812.

Your Lordship will have the goodness to bear in mind the date of my last letter from T—— to your Lordship (the 17th ult.), since which, the following events took place in the political world. The first Cabinet after that period, took place on the 20th, in which Lord Wellesley told his colleagues formally, that it was his intention to support the conduct of the Irish Government on the approaching discussion of Lord Fitzwilliam's motion upon the subject; but that he would also take that opportunity of expressing in his place the very opposite views he entertained of the Catholic claims to those which he believed the greater part of the Government did upon that subject, and which he also felt to be his duty to put the Prince Regent in possession of.

Perceval received this declaration with great ease and apparent jocularity, and said that he and the Cabinet, generally, had differed from Canning while in office upon that subject, but that, notwithstanding, they went on very comfortably together, and that his (Lord Wellesley's) individual dissent would not, therefore, necessarily induce a break-up of the administration.

Lord Wellesley, the day after, saw the Prince, with whom he remained six hours discussing the whole subject from beginning to end, during which, he allayed very considerably the "irritation" in the royal breast, which the "menacing attitude," as Mr. Perceval calls it, of the Irish Catholics had excited; and he left the presence in the idea of a perfect understanding existing between them, and a perfect acquiescence of sentiment. The consequence of this audience was the desire of the Prince to see the Lord Chancellor, Lord Liverpool, Lord Wellesley, and Mr. Perceval together at Carlton House, which he accordingly did, when a very warm discussion of the question took place. The Prince, at its commencement, desired that the whole question should be upon its abstract policy, without reference to former opinions of Government, either generally or individually considered, more particularly those which Mr. Perceval, either in his individual capacity, or as Attorney-General, had privately or publicly expressed. Lord Wellesley here again developed his views at great length; and the Prince expressed his perfect accordance with them, in opposition to those of the other three parties to this conference. They broke up, as your Lordship will suppose, without any decision; but the *immediate* consequence was Perceval's succumbing, and, in his next audience with the Prince, so far acceding to the views of the latter, as to give him perfect satisfaction. What the terms of accordance are, I cannot learn, nor does Lord Wellesley, but supposes that it is at least a settled point that the Catholics are to have their committee upon their petition.

This was the state of things when I wrote your Lordship a few lines with a quotation from a letter of my friend's, concluding with, "We shall have lost all except our honour." Indeed, I saw clearly that Perceval, by giving way, would entirely cut away Lord Wellesley's principal stay and support, and might thus possibly still continue the Prince's Minister, in spite of his teeth, to the exclusion of Lord Wellesley, or every other person. This, was also, seen clearly by Lord Wellesley and his friends; and the following extraordinary circumstances have arisen out of this feeling. The next interview between the Prince and Lord Wellesley, produced, on the part of the latter, a declaration, "that now the Royal Household, and those circumstances connected with it, being in a fair train of arrangement, and the restrictions upon the point of expiring, he (Lord Wellesley) thought it due to the Prince to state, that many personal considerations rendered it impossible for him to serve under Mr. Perceval any longer than it suited the Prince's wishes; and that he proposed to withdraw from the government at a reasonable period, subsequently to the unrestrained executive power having devolved upon his Royal Highness, but always regulating the period by the Prince's convenience and wishes."

What these personal reasons were, my various letters to your Lordship for this last year sufficiently indicate. But the Prince expressed himself thoroughly satisfied upon them, and the whole of Lord Wellesley's conduct; and only earnestly deprecating any immediate step of this nature.

Lord Wellesley then wrote to Perceval to the above effect; adding only, that Richard Wellesley would in any moment resign his situation and seat in Parliament; or if Mr. Perceval wished to retain him, he was perfectly welcome to do so. Perceval, in reply, expressed himself highly grieved at Lord Wellesley's determination, at the same time expressing the fairness of his conduct towards him individually; but used no argument whatever to dissuade him from his resolution. He (Perceval) then went to the Prince, and after stating the substance of Lord Wellesley's note, said that it was utterly impossible for the Government to go on, without giving him an immediate successor. The Prince expressed his extreme surprise at this—"that the resignation of Lord Wellesley was only one *in pettò*; not an immediate, but a postponed resignation; and that it would put him, the Prince, into great difficulty, and produce him much uneasiness of mind, to disturb the Government, as it was at present composed." Mr. Perceval, however, pertinaceously maintained his own opinion; and upon the Prince reluctantly acquiescing, named Lord Castlereagh as successor to the supposed vacant seats. The Prince spoke in very high terms of Lord Castlereagh, and said, if it must be so, "that he had no individual objection to him, rather on the contrary; but," said the Prince, "have you my Lord Castlereagh's own consent to this appointment?" Perceval said not, but that he had no doubt of it, and immediately sent young Peel[1] to Castlereagh.

Lord Castlereagh's very unexpected answer to this confident proposition was, "that he would be no stop-gap for any man, that when the restrictions were at an end, and the

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[1] The late Sir Robert Peel, Bart.

Prince chose to make him an offer, he would receive it with humble duty and acknowledgment, and it would be time enough then to give an answer."

Perceval then again saw the Prince, and very much mortified, communicated the bad success of this negociation; but still persisting in the necessity of Lord Wellesley's immediate resignation, and to the horror and astonishment of the Prince, proposed in the new arrangement it would be necessary to make, to bring in Lord Sidmouth and his friends.

The Prince immediately said: "Is it possible Mr. Perceval that you are ignorant of my feelings and sentiments towards that person? I now tell you, I never will have confidence in him, or in any person who forces him upon me; if, after this, you choose to employ him, be it so; but I warn you that you must take all the responsibility of the measure upon yourself." Steadily persisting in this language, Perceval took the alarm, and desisted, but on Monday last he returned to the charge no less than twice, but still with the same success; at length, finding it impossible to shake the Prince, he made the latter the following modest proposition. "That as the measure of Lord Wellesley's immediate resignation could not be carried into effect, and as Lord Wellesley's determination was known to the Cabinet, in order to go on at all with propriety, it would be necessary that his Royal Highness should empower him to state that he possessed his (the Prince's) *entire* and *exclusive* confidence, in whatever quarter he might have occasion to use the assertion of such authority!"

This, the Prince positively and repeatedly refused in the steadiest manner, and in a tone of sarcasm and disgust that Mr. Perceval will not easily forget. Since then, Lord Wellesley has repeatedly seen the Prince, who informed him of all that passed, with the severest comments on Perceval's craft, impudence and folly.

Thus affairs stand as to the schism in the Cabinet; all that I can add to this statement, is that Perceval also stated to the Prince, at the same audience, that Yorke's health was so bad as to oblige him to resign, so soon as *the expiration of the restrictions.* Upon which the Prince said: "And why, Mr. Perceval, should the necessity exist for Lord Wellesley, and not for Mr. Yorke, of *immediate* resignation?" To which Mr. Perceval had not a word to say.

From the above premises, your Lordship will be far more able to draw the just and necessary conclusions than I can be; but the impression upon the minds of Lord Wellesley's bosom friends is—and that derived, from communications with those about the person, and most in the confidence of the Prince—that as soon as the Prince is his own master, he will make to Opposition a fair and honourable proposition to come into administration, and that Lord Wellesley will be the organ through which it will be made; which, if refused, will put them so much in the wrong, that he will be thus enabled to throw himself upon the country, as the framer of his own Government, and put Lord Wellesley at its head. All I can vouch for is, the exactitude of my details, and the zeal and devotion with which I am constantly imbued in all my relations with your Lordship.

It is much to be regretted that the numerous letters which, as Lord Sidmouth's biographer has acknowledged,[1] passed between the Minister and his Lordship at this particular period, have shared the fate of other interesting portions of the Sidmouth Papers, and so prevented any one learning from that source, what use the former made of the Prince Regent's appreciation of his confidential friend.

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[1] "Life of Lord Sidmouth," Vol. III., p. 74.

It is affirmed that "the negociation was completed without difficulty,"[1] but as according to the same authority, at least four months elapsed before Lord Sidmouth could secure the object of his ambition; the revelations of the Marquis of Buckingham's correspondent, are likely to be nearer the truth.

Great as the temptation is to elucidate this little mystery, the increasing interest of events immediately impending, necessitates our at once bringing forward the following note from Lord Grenville, who had just delivered in the House of Lords one of his finest speeches. It contains an indication of an approaching demonstration on the part of the Prince Regent, the probable result of which had apparently for some time been carefully studied.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Feb. 3, 1812.

Many thanks to you, my dearest brother, for your intelligence, which from all that gradually turns up, and from everything that comes to me, is, I have no doubt, perfectly accurate.

I can, however, hardly bring myself to believe that the Prince will send Wellesley on such an errand as you mention.

We shall probably to-day give notice of a motion on the Orders of Council, for Monday next. What will Wellesley do or say? He is directly and officially responsible for the quarrel with America, which I have every reason to believe they really have rested on the extravagant ground of requiring America to compel Bonaparte to open the ports of Europe to our trade.

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[1] "Life of Lord Sidmouth," Vol. III., p. 73.

One half of Wellesley's speech, that about making the concessions to the Catholics, was got by heart, and was the best thing he has yet done—the other that about time, Coronation Act, &c., was an attempt at debate, and very indifferent.

The report of the day is that Lord Hertford is to be immediately named Chamberlain, Lord Yarmouth Vice-Chamberlain, and our cousin Egmont, Master of the Horse.

I did not suffer at all from the exertion, no small one, of speaking from half past five to near half past six.

"A looker on sees most of the game," is an axiom of very respectable antiquity, the truth of which can scarcely be disputed, when the person thus indicated is so observant and well-informed, as the writer of the next letter. His information will assist the reader in forming a correct knowledge of the more mystifying circumstances that immediately follow.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

My dear Father,

Affairs remain as doubtful as ever as to results. The opinions of those, however, who affect to be best informed, is, that Lords Grenville and Grey will be sent for, but what will be the result nobody guesses. The communication will certainly be of the *hollowest* description. Attempts will be made to stave off the Catholic Question, and we shall see whether he[1] will dare break off upon that point. Lord Grenville seems fully determined to be very stout, and not to come in except upon those terms alone on which he ought.

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[1] The Prince Regent.

I have had much conversation to-day with one of our last year's *Frondeurs,* on the subject of Canning. From him, who has the best means of judging, I am sorry to say that I find all chance of co-operation between Canning and Whitbread is as distant as it ever was. From him, however, I also find that the tone amongst the leaders of our party on that subject, is not the same as it was last year. It is plain that if the question ever reaches this point of discussion, a decision will be to be taken between these two persons. It will be a question of very great difficulty and delicacy, though I must confess, if the opinion formed by my informant is correct, as to the leaning of our friends, I have a very clear opinion as to what will be the best choice to make.

You know how much upon these subjects Lord Grenville requires to keep him in heart, and therefore you will not wonder at my very earnest anxiety that you should come up if these discussions go on. It is possible they may not, but if they do, I am quite convinced your presence will be *absolutely necessary.* The tone of ministers as well as their appearance, is very low and desponding, and it probably will not have escaped you as very symptomatic in last night's debate, the anxiety with which Arbuthnot went entirely out of his way in the speech he made upon the subject of his Constantinople accounts, to defend the whole of the Dardanelles expedition. For good, steady government times a Secretary of the Treasury is not usually so candid, and when he is, it looks very much as if he thought the house was tottering over his head.

Ever dutifully and affectionately yours,

N. T.

Having sufficiently traced the preliminary negociations it is time to produce the genuine proposal for an alliance between Carlton House and the Opposition, as at last it was promulgated in the official communication which follows Lord Grenville's letter.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Feb. 13, 1811 [1812.]

My dearest Brother,

Grey has this instant been with me to show me a letter which he has just received from the Duke of York, desiring to see him this evening on particular business. This business is (as we already have learnt) to deliver to him some paper or message about forming an united government—the plan of which *united* government begins, you will observe, by the same step which the King employed (very unnecessarily) to disunite Lord Rockingham and Lord Shelburne; viz., the sending for the latter in preference to the former, though he was the avowed head of the party then in opposition.

That this trick will entirely fail as to creating any jealousy between Grey and me, I very confidently believe.

But it will of course strengthen, if possible, the determination which I had already taken, to keep out of this *maudite galère,* in which no good could be done but by the co-operation of the whole crew, instead of having, as the rowers infallibly will, be they who they may, the whole efforts of the *master* employed against them. To drop the metaphor, I have been betrayed once by the King, and I have no taste for affording to his son the same opportunity, when I have so little cause to doubt that he has the same disposition.

As to coalescing with Perceval or Wellesley, I believe Grey quite as determined against it as myself. The whole will end, I doubt not, in the continuance of Perceval, with Castlereagh and Sidmouth to help him. And this, I believe, is what Lord Yarmouth means, whose intentions are those which are alone of any consequence.

Should the thing draw on into any discussion, I shall greatly feel your absence from town. Why should not you come, were it only for a week or ten days, to witness the *dénouement* of this curious scene, and to assist me with your advice, should I have any part to sustain in it. For unless the Prince sends *to me*, I certainly shall decline mixing myself at all in it, and shall leave it to him to whom the question is put, to return the answer.

Yet still, I wish you were here, for the scene is shifting from hour to hour.

It is not till this evening that Grey will see the Duke of York; and as his Royal Highness is a *parleur indéfatigable*, as Mirabeau described him, the conference will probably last beyond my bed-time. But I shall know the result to-morrow.

THE PRINCE REGENT TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

Carlton House, Feb. 13, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

As the restrictions on the exercise of the royal authority will shortly expire, when I must make my arrangements for the future administration of the powers with which I am invested, I think it right to communicate to you those sentiments which I was withheld from expressing at an earlier period of the Session, by my earnest desire that the expected motion on the affairs of Ireland might undergo the deliberate discussion of Parliament unmixed with any other consideration.

I think it hardly necessary to call your recollection to the recent circumstances under which I assumed the authority delegated to me by Parliament. At a moment of unexampled difficulty and danger, I was called upon to make a selection of persons to whom I should entrust the functions of executive government.

My sense of duty to our royal father solely decided that choice; and every private feeling gave way to considerations which admitted of no doubt or hesitation. I trust I acted in that respect as the genuine representative of the august person whose functions I was appointed to discharge; and I have the satisfaction of knowing that such was the opinion of persons for whose judgment and honourable principles I entertain the highest respect. In various instances, as you well know, where the law of the last Session left me at full liberty, I have waived my personal gratification, in order that his Majesty might assume, on his restoration to health, every power and prerogative belonging to his crown. I certainly am the last person in the kingdom to whom it can be permitted to despair of our royal father's recovery.

A new era has now arrived; and I cannot but reflect with satisfaction on the events which have distinguished the short period of my restricted Regency. Instead of suffering in the loss of any of her possessions by the gigantic force which has been employed against them, Great Britain has added most important acquisitions to her empire. The national faith has been preserved inviolate towards our allies; and, if character is strength as applied to a nation, the increased and increasing reputation of his Majesty's arms will show to the nations of the continent, how much they may yet achieve when animated by a glorious spirit of resistance to a foreign yoke.

As to the critical situation of the war in the Peninsula, I shall be most anxious to avoid any measure which can lead my allies to suppose that I mean to depart from the present system. Perseverance alone can achieve the great object in question; and I cannot withhold my approbation from those who have honourably distinguished themselves in support of it. I have no predilections to indulge, no resentments to gratify, no objects to attain but such as are common to the whole empire. If such is the leading principle of my conduct—and I can appeal to the past as evidence of what the future will be—I flatter myself I shall meet with the support of Parliament, and of a candid and enlightened nation.

Having made the communication of my sentiments in this new and extraordinary crisis of our affairs, I cannot conclude without expressing the gratification I should feel if some of those persons with whom the early habits of my public life were formed, would strengthen my hands, and constitute a part of my government.

With such support, and aided by a vigorous and united administration, formed on the most liberal basis, I shall look with additional confidence to a prosperous issue of the most arduous contest in which Great Britain was ever engaged.

You are authorized to communicate these statements to Lord Grey, who, I have no doubt, will make them known to Lord Grenville.

I am always, my dearest Frederick,
Your ever affectionate Brother,
George P. R.

P.S. I shall send a copy of this letter immediately to Mr. Perceval.

It is proper that the comments on this remarkable document, of those persons to whom it more directly appealed, should have precedence of any other reference to it; therefore we at once place before the reader the following notes.

RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Feb. 14, 1812.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

It being William's intention to write to you, to tell you of the Duke of York having this morning delivered to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville a letter from the Prince to the Duke, inviting a communication from the two Lords, upon the proposal of acceding to the present government, I should not have thought it necessary to add anything by this post, if I did not imagine that upon so interesting a subject, you had rather hear too much than too little.

In the first place, the Prince's choice of the Duke of York in this negociation is a strong presumption in favour of the Prince's not intending a successful issue to it; as the Prince would certainly not have employed the Duke to form any administration, and to have assumed the power and consequence which he would have derived from forming it. Nor ought one to overlook that the Prince could not have selected any one for this discussion, whose opinions were more decidedly hostile to the Catholic Question, than the Duke of York is known to be. Yet all these remarks are trifling, when compared to the general tone and character of the Prince's letter; three fourths of that letter are nothing but the praise of the present administration, and the profession of adhering to their system upon the continent. He tells the Duke that "he was withheld from expressing his sentiments at an earlier period of the Session, by his earnest desire that the expected motion on the affairs of Ireland might undergo the deliberate discussion of Parliament, unmixed with any other consideration;" and yet you know that he sent down Tyrwhitt, M'Mahon, &c., in the House of Commons, and Lord Lake, &c., in the House of Lords, to vote against it. His letter contains no other allusion whatever to Ireland, except in the phrase he uses, as follows: "I am certainly the last person in the kingdom to whom it can be permitted to despair of our Royal father's recovery."

Then he details the glories and successes of his restricted Regency, or, in other words, of his Ministers during that time. And in regard to the Cabinet, he says, "I shall be most anxious to avoid any measures which can lead my allies to suppose that I mean to depart from the present system. Perseverance alone can achieve the great object in question; and I cannot withhold my approbation from those who have honourably distinguished themselves in support of it. I have *no* predilections to indulge, no restraints to gratify, no objects to attain, but such as are common to the whole empire." Then he says, "I flatter myself I shall meet with the support of Parliament, and of a candid and enlightened nation." And finally, "I cannot conclude without expressing the gratification I should feel, if *some of the persons with whom the* EARLY *habits of my public life were formed,* would strengthen my hands, and constitute a PART of my government. With such support, and aided by a vigorous and united administration, formed on the most liberal basis, I shall look with additional confidence to a prosperous issue of this most arduous contest. You are authorized to communicate these sentiments to Lord Grey, who, I have no doubt, will make them known to Lord Grenville.

P.S.—I shall send a copy of this letter, immediately to Mr. Perceval."

I have now extracted for you verbatim, all the striking parts of this letter, which very fortunately saves all our friends the labour and difficulty of much studied reply. Perhaps, my wish was to have dwelt upon all the very invidious topics, but some of our friends being disinclined to a detailed answer, I am quite ready to acquiesce in a short negative, and shall think it a very good riddance. So thinks Lord Grenville, who finds with deep despair, that besides three and a half millions of deficit, there are forty-two millions of unfunded Exchequer Bills.

Yorke, Wellesley, Ryder, and Camden, are said to be the four seats that will be supplied, but I know not by whom.

It is true that Lord Malpas has turned Papist at Messina.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Feb. 14, 1812.

Dearest Brother,

I have only an instant to say that the paper is more offensive than I could have believed.

It is mostly occupied in the praise of the great things that he and his Ministers have achieved in this year; and then adds, as it were, in a postcript, his wish that *some of the friends of his early public life* would strengthen his hands, and form a part of his Government, and that by such support and the aid of a vigorous and united administration, on the most liberal views, we shall look with confidence, &c.

Our answer is to be given to-morrow. It will, of course, be *no* as nearly as possible.

I will write, *sans faire des phrase,* soon to-morrow—the post waits.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Feb. 15, 1812.

Many thanks to you, my dearest brother, for your most kind and affectionate letter, exactly resembling the whole course of your conduct towards me, and such as I can only return by sentiments of the warmest reciprocal affection.

Much as I wish you in London, I cannot affect now to say that it is for the purpose of advice or aid in a negociation which I earnestly hope the answer we are now about to carry to the Duke of York this morning, will finally terminate.

Temple has undertaken to make for you in the course of this morning, copies of both these papers, and to send them by to-night's post. I do not, therefore, enlarge upon them.

There has not been, indeed there could not be, one moment's difference of opinion between Grey and myself, in this business. He is still more incensed than I am at the unworthy trick of attempting to separate us; indeed he has more reason to be so, because it could succeed only by his acting in an unworthy manner. The answer, such as we deliver it, is not very courtly. Had he and I followed our own course it would have been still less so, but we softened it in compliance with the wishes of all the few persons which it was fit to consult on such an occasion.

Perceval had received his copy of the Prince's letter before he made his speech in the House of Commons, and the Prince Regent *affects* to be very indignant with him.

Here follows the text of the reply,

LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

Feb. 15, 1812.

Sir,

We beg leave most humbly to express to your Royal Highness our dutiful acknowledgments for the gracious and condescending manner in which you have had the goodness to communicate to us the letter of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, on the subject of the arrangements to be now made for the future administration of the Public Affairs: and we take the liberty of availing ourselves of your gracious permission to address to your Royal Highness in this form, what has occurred to us in consequence of that communication. The Prince Regent, after expressing to your Royal Highness, in that letter, his sentiments on various public matters, has in the concluding paragraph condescended to intimate his wish, that "some of those persons with whom the early habits of his public life were formed, would strengthen his Royal Highness's hands, and constitute a part of his government." And his Royal Highness is pleased to add, that "with such support, aided by a vigorous and united administration formed on the most liberal basis, he would look with additional confidence to a prosperous issue of the most arduous contest in which Great Britain was ever engaged."

On the other parts of his Royal Highness's letter, we do not presume to offer any observations; but on the concluding paragraph, in so far as we may venture to suppose ourselves included in the gracious wish which it expresses, we owe it in obedience and duty to his Royal Highness, to explain ourselves with frankness and sincerity. We beg leave most earnestly to assure his Royal Highness, that no sacrifices, except those of honour and duty, would appear to us too great to be made for the purpose of healing the divisions of our country, and of uniting both its government and its people. All personal exclusion we entirely disclaim. We rest on public measures; and it is on this ground alone that we express without reserve the impossibility of our uniting with the present government. Our differences of opinion are too many and too important to admit of such an union.

His Royal Highness will, we are confident, do us the justice to remember that we have twice already acted on this impression: in 1809, on the proposition then made to us under his Majesty's authority; and last year, when his Royal Highness was graciously pleased to require our advice respecting the formation of a new government. The reasons which we then humbly submitted to him, are strengthened by the increasing danger of the times. Nor has there down to this moment, appeared even any approximation towards such an agreement of opinion on the public interests, as can alone form a basis for the honourable union of parties previously opposed to each other.

Into the detail of these differences we are unwilling to enter; they embrace almost all the leading features of the present policy of the empire. But his Royal Highness has himself been pleased to advert to the late deliberations of Parliament on the affairs of Ireland. This is a subject above all others, important in itself, and connected with the most pressing dangers. Far from concurring in the sentiments which his Majesty's ministers have on that occasion so recently expressed, we entertain opinions directly opposite. We are firmly persuaded of the necessity of a total change of the present system of government in that country, and of the immediate repeal of those civil disabilities under which so large a portion of his Majesty's subjects still labour, on account of their religious opinions.

To recommend to Parliament this repeal, is the first advice which it would be our duty to offer to his Royal Highness, nor could we even, for the shortest time, make ourselves responsible for any further delay in the proposal of a measure, without which we could entertain no hope of rendering our services useful to his Royal Highness or to our country.

We have only, therefore, further to beg your Royal Highness to lay before the Prince Regent the expressions of our humble duty, and the sincere and respectful assurance of our earnest wishes for whatever may best promote the ease, honour, and advantage of his Royal Highness's government, and the success of his endeavours for the public welfare.

We have the honour to be, with the utmost respect and deference,

Your Royal Highness's
Most dutiful and devoted servants,
GREY.
GRENVILLE.

The Duke of York appears to have done all in his power to make the Opposition Lords believe that he was acting in perfect good faith in his part of the negociation —but in the first place, they were not so ardent in the pursuit of office, as Lord Temple desired them to be; and in the next, they were well informed of the obstacles that existed in the Court to their prolonged possession of it. The following papers will well repay the labour of perusal.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lower Grosvenor Street, Saturday.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Under another cover I send you the correspondence which has passed. I believe my uncle trusts to my informing you of what has taken place. He and Lord Grey carried their answer to York House. When they delivered it to the Duke, he read it and expressed what appeared to be unfeigned regret at its contents. He said he was quite sure his brother's letter, and his wishes had been completely misunderstood, that he could not take upon himself to say the Prince Regent never meant to express his expectation that Lords Grenville and Grey should join the present Government, that all he wished was, that they should form a Government, consisting of those who at a time like this, would rally round him. Under these circumstances, the Duke expressed his hope that they would take back their answer and reconsider it, as it was framed upon a misconception of his brother's ideas. The answer to this, couched, of course, in civil and decorous terms, was, that the answer was not their own alone, but that of their friends, and that, however flattering to them might be the anxiety on the Duke's part to put a different interpretation upon the Prince's letter, from that which in their eyes it appeared to bear, he must excuse them if they persisted in returning what they considered as an answer to the letter, instead of withdrawing it for the purpose of new modelling it to meet his Royal Highness's interpretation of that letter. The Duke then took it, and wished to know, supposing the difficulties attending the Irish question removed, what were the other points of difference to which they alluded, between them and the King's Government, and what the points on which they agreed or could agree. The answer was, that it was needless to enter into that discussion, the negociation being, as they conceived, broken off *in limine,* but that it would be a much easier task to point out subjects of difference than of agreement. They then parted, the Duke expressing great regret, and still hoping the discussion would not terminate there. Lords Grenville and Grey seem fully impressed with the conviction that the Duke was honestly anxious to bring about an accommodation, if it could be managed.

If you look to the Prince's letter, you will see that it is utterly impossible that the Prince Regent could mean other than that Lords Grey and Grenville should form a part of the Government now composed of those who had carried on the Spanish war so much to his satisfaction. This meaning is expressed in terms not only very clear, but very offensive to them, and especially so to Lord Grenville. The interpretation, therefore, put upon it by the Duke, is evidently a new one, and calculated to open to them the idea of forming a Government with Wellesley. You will, I am sure, agree with me in thinking they did right to take no hint, to enter into no discussions, and to confine themselves to the answering the written demand placed in their hands. The letters have been communicated to the Duke of Gloucester, who is stout, and declares that nothing will do but "our sticking together and showing the Prince Regent that no respectable man in the Opposition will join him." Moira is also stout ; so is Sheridan. My own belief is, that the Prince Regent will take fright, and will make some other communication, to try to hamper them in a negociation, and then to break off upon terms. In the meanwhile, Perceval expresses much alarm at the prospect of opposition before him. He is trying to patch himself up with the Doctor and Castlereagh, if he can get him ; but of the latter there are doubts. If Perceval is

Minister, I fervently pray for the Doctor again. The Duke of Gloucester thinks that Wellesley will go on with Perceval. Everything is certainly possible; but I doubt this, because Perceval's government, if it goes on, must go on upon the exclusion of the Catholic claims; and Wellesley, by his speech, made it impossible for him to form part of a new Government upon those terms.

Ever dutifully aud affectionately yours,

N. T.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Saturday.

My dearest Brother,

Temple knows all that is to be known, and has undertaken to write it to you. Lord Grey and my brother carried their answer to the Duke of York at one to-day. They describe his manner as being very cordial, and as expressing great solicitude for the success of this overture from the Prince. When he read the answer, he very strongly insisted that there had been a misunderstanding of the Prince Regent, who never meant to confine them to a junction with the present ministers, but to invite them to rally round him; and the Duke added, that with this *explanation from him,* he hoped they would reconsider their answer. They believe him to be quite fair and sincere in all this business, but their answer, of course, was, that being required by the Prince Regent to state their sentiments on the paper communicated to them, they felt themselves obliged to confine their answer to the matter of the paper itself. The Duke endeavoured to learn what *other difficulties* there could be besides Ireland; this was parried by Lord Grenville saying that the difficulty would be, on the other hand to state any one point on which he and Lord Grey agreed with the present ministers.

I was afraid of another letter of explanation from the Prince, but I am just assured, from good authority, that the Prince Regent will send no answer, but professes to be offended at the positiveness with which our answer speaks on the Catholic question. I may, therefore, congratulate you on this termination, so much what I wished it to be, and doubtless no less satisfactory to you. Perceval will go on, and the doubt is whether Wellesley will go on, or be supplied by Castlereagh.

Lord Moira, I believe, is stoutly with us as to the letter. Lord Downshire is strongly with us, upon it, so is the Duke of Gloucester.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Feb. 17, 1812.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

There seems little, or rather *no* room to doubt that the whole discussion is at an end for the present. His Royal Highness has directed Perceval to form his government, and has promised him full support, &c. &c. The language of Carlton House is said to be full of anger—that of Brookes's is not less so; and a re-appointment of the Premier, and the *friends of his early public life,* does not seem a very probable event.

Wellesley has refused to act *under* Perceval, and carried his seals to the Prince Regent, but keeps them, at his desire, for forty-eight hours longer.

Yorke has agreed to continue *some* time longer at the Admiralty.

What portion of Castlereaghs and Doctors is to go into the broth, I cannot say.

There are letters in town from Dublin, mentioning an account received at the Castle, of a French fleet off Kinsale; but you and I know that such accounts obtain ready faith, both on the coast and in the capital of Ireland.

A few troops landed there just now, would give no little trouble.

Lord Moira has behaved in the handsomest and most direct manner. He represented in strong terms against the letter (which, however, he did not see till it was actually sent), and told the Premier he had nothing left for it, but to withdraw from public life; which he should immediately do.

It is said, but this I do not know from him, that he has refused the Garter.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Feb., 1812.

My dearest Brother,

I still believe, and rejoice in the belief, that the chapter is closed and the book is shut; and I think you will be of the same opinion, when I tell you, that the Duke of York yesterday sent a verbal message from the Prince Regent to Lord Grey, to say that he trusted that what had passed would make no interruption in their *private friendship*.

We are assured that Lord Moira has declined the Garter, professing that he means to retire altogether from public life, and to employ himself in his private affairs, which he tells the Prince he has too long neglected. This is very manly and very honourable. The Duke of Norfolk being out of town, was sent for by the Prince by express, and he is now at Carlton House. I hope he will have stoutness enough to follow Moira's example about the Garter—but all flesh is frail, and he is very fleshy. It is, however, gratifying to find that the answer is highly approved by all our friends; and Lauderdale assured me yesterday, that he did not believe we had lost one peer except Cholmondely and Headford; yet I suppose we must reckon Northumberland now decidedly adverse to us, because, though he was magnificent enough to refuse the Bed-chamber for his son, he was shabby enough to ask for it for his son-in-law.

There is a report of to-day, that Yorke consents to prolong his resignation for a few weeks, but I know not if this be true. Canning's language is reported to be as violent as ever against Perceval, and to regret nothing in our conduct except that we did not sufficiently temporize with the Prince to have succeeded in turning out Perceval, which Canning says we might easily have done; I suppose he means by our having given Perceval a fraternal hug. We are told from Ireland, that four of the Judges are against Downes upon the Convention Act; and I hear Lord Hutchinson quoted, for saying that after the Prince's letter to Lord Grey, the Catholics will neither address nor petition the Prince—*nous verrons.*

Old Lady Downshire (I hope she does not hear me) is as violent as her son, with us, and against the Prince. She says it would have been happy for him to have died before this disgrace.

I suspect, by what I hear to-day, the old farce of "No Popery" will be resorted to in this hour of distress.

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Monday, 1812.

DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

Since I wrote on Saturday, I hear Lord Wellesley has resigned *certainly*, and I am told he and Canning are both to be decided on the next Catholic Question, for immediate conciliation with the Catholics of Ireland. I believe they are both full of mischief to the Emperor and King Perceval; but I suppose the Lords Grey and Grenville and Whitbread are too *squeamish* to give them any encouragement, which, under existing circumstances, I think foolish; but I suppose it will end in Perceval's serving them, somehow or other, after the next Catholic Question is decided; as it will be according to Mr. Perceval's system of intolerance; for now the Prince Regent has made his option, I take it many of the House of Commons who have been waiting for it, and not attending, will now attend under the banners of the Treasury. The Duke of Norfolk and Lord Moira have certainly refused, it is said, the Garter. They talk of Lord Chichester going to Ireland. I have no time to write more, as the post bell rings.

Yours in haste,
W. B.

The Opposition are not at all cast down. I see them all at Brooks's in very high spirits, talking at Lord Y——, and wondering who the r—— or vile s—— can be, who has poisoned the Prince Regent's mind against his old friends; and this as loud as a trumpet. M* * * * Square has, in fact, done the whole thing, and some say a little of Windsor intermixed.

CHAPTER IX.

[1812.]

SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY'S OPINION OF THE CONDUCT OF THE PRINCE REGENT IN HIS NEGOCIATION WITH LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY—VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH SUCCEEDS THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY AS FOREIGN SECRETARY—MR. RICHARD WELLESLEY—CARLTON HOUSE ANECDOTES—MORE SECRET HISTORY—EARL MOIRA AND THE PRINCE REGENT—NEWS FROM SPAIN—SECRETS OF THE CABINET—SIEGE OF BADAJOZ—DEATH OF THE MARCHIONESS OF BUCKINGHAM—THE CITY AUTHORITIES AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT—THE CATHOLIC QUESTION—OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS.

CHAPTER IX.

Sir Samuel Romilly thus pronounces his opinion on the conduct of the Prince Regent in the transaction just narrated. "He has proposed indeed a coalition (of Lords Grey and Grenville) with Mr. Perceval. A proposal which he knew must be rejected. The very proposal, indeed, imports that a total sacrifice of honour and of character was a necessary qualification for entering into the Prince's service. He says in his letter, that he has no predilection to indulge, and no resentment to gratify: a most dangerous statement at the commencement of his reign, considering his past conduct and his past professions. It will be understood to mean that there are no injuries he will not forgive, and no services that he will not forget. A declaration better calculated to estrange from him all his friends, if he has any remaining; and to invite the most violent personal opposition to his government (since everything at a convenient time may be forgiven) could hardly have been invented."[1]

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[1] "Diary of his Parliamentary Life," Vol. III., p. 11.

He presently adds, "Lord Wellesley it seems, had before tendered his resignation, and Lord Castlereagh is to succeed him. What other changes are to take place is not yet known, and perhaps not determined. The Prince does not pass a day without visiting Lady Hertford."[1]

Wilberforce referring to the ministerial changes, makes the following entry in his Diary, under the date, February 25th. "Castlereagh sat yesterday upon the Treasury bench for a time—evidently to show he was in. I named it to Mr. Perceval afterwards, and said what a good man of business he was."[2] It was not long before the new Secretary of State, proved to the nation how thoroughly he deserved this opinion; and to his exercise of the valuable qualification here attributed to him on no mean authority, may be traced the brilliant successes that marked his public career.

Whatever may be the general opinion of the conduct of the Prince Regent in these negociations, there is no doubt that his government was greatly strengthened by the acquisition of Viscount Castlereagh as Foreign Secretary. As for the other anticipated addition to their ranks, here is additional evidence that difficulties still lay in the way of his promotion.

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[1] As the reader must have noticed, no slight animadversion, with a more than ordinary amount of scandal, were levelled at this lady by the Opposition. There is, however, every reason to believe that there was as little foundation for either. The Marchioness of Hertford may have possessed considerable personal influence with the Prince Regent, who was partial to her society, and entertained a high opinion of her judgment; and this constituted "the head and front of her offending." Through her the political influence of her family was indeed considerable, and it was exercised invariably in favour of Mr. Perceval.

[2] "Life," by his Sons. Vol. IV., p. 161

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Saturday.

My dear Father,

We begin a little to see our way. Castlereagh yesterday accepted the *Foreign* Seals. Sidmouth has been waiting to be sent for most *im*patiently for some time. There are discussions pending relative to him; but I understand the Prince has set his face against his forming part of the government. Added to this, Lord Lonsdale has notified that he will not support, if Sidmouth comes in; and it is also said that Sidmouth insists upon an immediate repeal of the Orders in Council.

Canning is violent, and wants to be permitted to be in eager opposition. I see a disposition rising amongst our friends, respecting Canning, which will soon ripen into discussions which must bring that question to an issue. I dread Lord Grenville's pertinacity on the Spanish question. I am quite sure, *and I do not speak on weak grounds,* that could we but come to an understanding upon that point, an Opposition could be formed, before which Perceval could not stand the Session. I cannot but wish you would write your opinion upon this, to Lord Grenville.

Ever, my dear Father,
Yours, dutifully and affectionately,
Ch. T.

The following correspondence is merely added as another link in the chain of evidence respecting the state of parties at this remarkable period. The writer

—son of the Marquis—of the first communication, had been an active member of the Wellesley section of the government, and was not unlikely to prove as active a member of the Opposition. He has been more than once mentioned in the preceding letters.

MR. RICHARD WELLESLEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

Grosvenor Square, Feb. 17, 1812.

My dear Lord,

I am sorry that it is not in my power to call upon you at twelve, and to avail myself of your kind offer to show me the papers. I have heard the substance from very good authority, and shall regret the circumstances that may prevent me from associating with those, for whom I shall always feel the warmest sentiments of esteem and of gratitude.

Yours very sincerely,
R. Wellesley.

EARL TEMPLE TO MR. RICHARD WELLESLEY.

Dear Sir,

I am extremely glad to find that you have learnt from good authority the substance of the letters which have passed between the Duke of York and Lords Grenville and Grey. This, of course, supersedes the necessity of my complying with your wishes to have those letters shown to you.

If their contents have been faithfully reported to you, you will have observed that Lords Grenville and Grey at least do not feel it necessary to mix up personal feelings, with considerations of public duty, and however you may regret "the circumstances that may prevent you from *associating* with those" for whom you entertain feelings of "esteem and gratitude," you will not, I am sure, be sorry to find that no feelings can operate upon them, or upon any of those connected with them, which can make it necessary for them to decline "associating" with those with whom they may have the strongest political differences.

I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,
C. T.

MR. RICHARD WELLESLEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

Grosvenor Square, Feb. 18, 1812.

My dear Lord,

I am glad to find from your note, that I did receive a faithful report of the answer made by Lords Grenville and Grey, in which they did not mix up (as you express it) "personal feelings with considerations of public duty;" and you will not do me more than justice by believing that I most cordially partake in those feelings, and trust that I shall never forget them in the strongest differences of political life.

But you appear to have misapprehended my meaning in the use of the word *associating,* and I should be particularly sorry, if you had imagined me *to have declined,* or to have *intended to decline* associating with those, for whom I feel the sincerest esteem and gratitude. You will not suppose me guilty of such an absurdity—although the words of your note induce me to fear that you may have done so. The plain meaning I intended to convey to you, and of which I should not trouble you with a repetition, unless I feared that it had not been interpreted by you in the spirit by which it was dictated; was this. I intended to express the regret, which I have ever felt, that circumstances *may* prevent me from enjoying the society of persons whom I esteem; as they undoubtedly have done, for some time; and as they do at the present time. In these words, I had no hidden or political meaning, and I shall always hail with peculiar satisfaction anything that tends to remove the causes of that regret.

Believe me, my dear Lord,
Very sincerely yours.
R. WELLESLEY.

There are other illustrations of the Carlton House policy—not the least interesting of the series will be found in the following statement.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Feb. 24, 1812.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

The strange histories of Carlton House supply the appetite of the town with daily anecdotes more or less interesting. Two days ago, the Prince (who had met Lauderdale at a dinner of the Duke of York's, a fortnight past) invited Lauderdale to a dinner at which the Princess Charlotte, the Duke of York, two or three ladies, with Sheridan, Lord Erskine, Adam, and two or three more of his family, making from sixteen to twenty, were at table, at Carlton House. A good deal of wine passed, even before the dessert; and before the servants had quitted the room, the Prince began a furious and unmeasured attack upon the *letters,* and writers of the letters. This went on some time. The Princess Charlotte rose to make her first appearance at the Opera, but rose *in tears,* and expressed herself strongly to Sheridan, as he led her out, upon the distress which she had felt in hearing her father's language. Nor should it be forgot that, at the

Opera, seeing Lord Grey in the box opposite to her, she got up, and kissed her hand to him repeatedly, in the sight of the whole Opera.

After her departure from Carlton House, Lauderdale, with great respect, but with great earnestness and propriety, addressed the Prince upon his abuse of his friends, vindicated the letters in the strongest terms, declared his adherence to every word and sentiment in them, and, having spoken very strongly, but very respectfully, got up to make his bow. The Prince stopped him, and made him sit down for a little while longer, when they all broke up; and the next morning Lauderdale wrote a letter to the Prince, repeating in writing all he had said on Saturday.

The next day, Sunday, upon Lord Moira's calling at Carlton House, by the Prince's order, the Prince sent out his page in waiting to him, to tell him that he had been *so drunk* the preceding night, he was not well enough to see him, but ordered the page to tell him that he, the Prince, had settled the Catholic Question, which was not any longer to form a *Government question.* The Prince, later on Sunday, said the same thing to Sheridan, who asked if he might be authorised to say that from the Prince to Ponsonby; and the Prince said, "By all means." You see in this, we have only the story of one side; but it remains to see what Perceval's story will be.

I think I know that some strong things have been said to Perceval, by the old Pittites, of their not acceding to his, Perceval's, notion of absolute and unqualified refusal to the Catholics. I believe, too, that Lord Castlereagh has stipulated for his own Catholic vote, if he joins Perceval's government; so that I think it is probably true that Perceval has consented to allow those of his Cabinet and supporters who are for the Catholics, to say so individually; a permission he may very safely give them, because as long as he, Perceval, continues to be Prime Minister, the Court, and the Church, and Bishops, and Tories, will all vote with Perceval in the Commons, and with Liverpool in the Lords, without caring about Harrowby, and Mulgrave, and Castlereagh, and so forth. The same solution will be supplied in this manner to the Prince, as he may answer the Irish petition of the 28th, by referring the matter to Parliament, and by graciously assuring them that the influence of *his government* shall not be used against the free and unbiassed discussion of the question in Parliament.

Moira's intention of going abroad is said to have struck the Prince very much; and the Prince has strongly endeavoured to impress the Duke of Norfolk that he means favourably to the Catholics, and is not unfriendly to Lords Grenville and Grey. But I presume this is chiefly calculated to gain the Duke, who is, however, hitherto very stout. My chief apprehension is of some renewed overture, which I the more deprecate, because we now stand so well upon the letters, that any change of ground would be disadvantageous, unless the result should be much more promising than I expect it.

The parties most interested, have been permitted to give their evidence respecting, or to express their elucidations of, these transactions; but there is still an account to be brought forward, which will be found to throw upon them much additional light.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

On Monday evening last, I found Lord Wellesley's friends in very high spirits. He had seen the Prince Regent repeatedly—not less, I believe, than seven or eight times from the period of the accident at Oatlands; and each time with an increase of confidence and appearance of attachment. Very great mystery was observed towards me respecting the subject-matter of these interviews; but I was desired to remark that Lord Wellesley had seen the Prince twice before Perceval had been once admitted: that the visits of the former were far more in number than those of the latter; and at the same time, was assured that had Lord Wellesley chosen it, he might have managed the Prince's objects, and have brought them to a state of maturity, without the intervention of Perceval at all; or at least to a much later period than has actually been the case. But that Lord Wellesley determining to act an honourable part, insisted upon Perceval being made acquainted with everything that passed between him (Lord Wellesley) and the Prince, and that due decorum and etiquette should be observed toward him as First Minister, and in every instance.

Finding that I made no advance in knowing the real posture of affairs from this quarter, I worked another way. Your Lordship may recollect a Mr. O—, who settled the intricate accounts between the Duke of Kent and Greenwood. He is here now for his health; and our friendship, always great, is considerably increased by my having been of service to him in Portugal. Lord Grenville gave him his commission through Lord A—— and his gratitude to his Lordship is exceedingly great.

He is almost domesticated at Castlebar Hill, and early in the week communicated to me the following facts. First, that the business in actual agitation was not any ministerial arrangement or change whatever, but merely that of the provision to be made for the Royal Family so soon as Parliament should meet, viz., for the Queen, contemplating her as Queen

Dowager; an increased establishment for the Princesses, and the payment of the Prince's and his brother's debts—the Prince's first of course. This, with the subject of the new Civil List were first to be agreed on, before any other measure whatever should be taken into consideration. Again, he said that the Prince's views would be submitted to Perceval and the Cabinet in the shape of a Memoir, with explanatory documents on Wednesday next, (last Wednesday); that if Perceval would carry them through, the Prince would go on with him; if not, he would take Lord Wellesley, who approved of the Prince's views *in toto!*

Having well fathomed this source of intelligence, I went with it to my first quarter directly, and, to their extreme astonishment showed them I was in the secret—most carefully locking up in my own breast whence I derived it. Since that period, all reserve has been at an end; and I am confident the parties themselves are now not more intimate with what is going on (at least, so far as they are concerned,) than I am ever since.

My friend then told me that it was very true the discussions were entirely confined to the pecuniary arrangements to be made, but not to the extent of my information; for that the Prince's own establishment, his mother's, and the payment of his own debts, were quite sufficient evil for the approaching day of trial, (by which it appears to me that the Prince has been duping his good brother of Kent, if not the rest of the family.) That Lord Yarmouth had had a long discussion for two hours, since the Prince's return, with Lord Wellesley; that, although Lord Wellesley certainly did approve of the principle of relieving the burthens of the Prince, and providing against their possible recurrence by an ample provision, yet the *quantum* demanded by the Prince was excessive; and that the whole abounded in difficulties; yet they were not impossible, at least in degree; in short, that he was willing to go through with the affair; and Yarmouth went away apparently well pleased. I do not know the date of this interview, but it was probably about this day week. It is a very observable circumstance, that since the Prince's leaving Oatlands, he has not sent for Lord Wellesley, but, as above, substituted Yarmouth, who, Lord Wellesley declares, either from stupidity or want of common manners, had not one solitary qualification for the office he was put upon.

In the meanwhile the mercury rose to the top of the tube with Lord Wellesley's friends, as every circumstance tended to convince them that the Minister would never comply with the Prince's wishes; which even they allow were most outrageously extravagant, and must, *when devolved to the ministry of Lord Wellesley himself*, be sufficiently abated and modified. And even Lord Wellesley told Culling Smith to tell the Duke of York, that if the Prince persisted in his demands in too high a tone, he would talk to him in a way he had not yet experienced. At length, the papers already alluded to, were furnished to the members of the government individually, and a Cabinet was summoned to sit upon them, on Thursday evening last. Accordingly, Perceval opened the business with great warmth; stated the enormous demand now made, and the impossibility of meeting it from the deteriorated state of the finances of the country; then talked of the public burthens; but above all, of the odious unpopularity of the measure, which he said, he, as an honest man, could not, nor would support — that no honest man could; in which strain he continued for an hour and a half. The gauntlet thus thrown down, Lord Wellesley took up, and went through the whole in half-an-hour, as I understand, in the most able and logical manner, thoroughly refuting Perceval and his doctrines. Liverpool spoke eagerly on the side of Perceval. Lord Camden said a few unintelligible words, among which unanimity was the only one distinctly heard; and the Cabinet broke up without any open division on the subject. But on minute inquiry, I cannot make out that Lord Wellesley had any partizan in it, save Mulgrave, and perhaps Camden.

Yesterday morning, those who have been so anxious for Lord Wellesley's elevation, were top-gallant-mast-high in their expectations; for now a very promising rupture had taken place, and they fought on the side of the Prince by Lord Wellesley—what could one have more? and, indeed, had I time and opportunity, which I had not, to go into detail, I should have written in the same strain then to your Lordship. I went, however, at eight, last night, to pursue the triumph, &c., a little farther—when lo! and behold! it was all a dream! Lord Wellesley had, in the course of the day been sent for to Carlton House, had seen Adams and McMahon, and had been informed that the Prince had compromised the matter with Perceval, had abated nearly three-fourths in his demands, and that now, even Perceval declared he could meet the Prince without difficulty.

Anything more *à la mort* or chapfallen, your Lordship cannot conceive than our little senate presented; and it was agreed upon that Lord Wellesley's game was totally up. That if the Prince would be contented with a quarter of a loaf instead of a whole one, nobody could help it, but that the only way to solve the problem of the Prince's conduct, was that —— *was a villain,* and had never communicated to the Prince a moiety of what he was desired to do by Lord Wellesley in the aforesaid conference; and I really believe there is much in this, and that he acted like Worcester in "Henry the Fourth" throughout the affair. Lord Wellesley, however, has demanded an audience this day of the

Prince, who has conceded it, and I shall probably know what passes this evening.

I have not time to read, much less correct this letter, which I beg of your Lordship, therefore, to excuse in respect of its state of accurate precision, and I shall *certainly* trouble your Lordship again on Monday. In the meanwhile, I commit my honour, and perhaps my life to your Lordship's keeping, with a confidence the most unbounded; and although I should think the latter cheaply lost, to be of the slightest service to your Lordship, I cannot so contemplate that of the former.

I had purposed to go into a long detail of the various movements which preceded the very unexpected measure of the Prince Regent's continuance of Mr. Perceval in his high situation. I find, however, that I can add very little to the subject matter of my frequent notes to your Lordship during this critical interval; and the gross weakness or dissimulation of the principal in these matters, to the very last moment, would serve rather to disgust than to *inform* or amuse your Lordship. Some detached sketches of what took place may not be uninteresting.

When the Prince communicated to his Cabinet the intended proposition to Lords Grenville and Grey, Mr. Perceval immediately volunteered the drawing it up, and accordingly sent his paper by the Lord Chancellor to Carlton House on Wednesday sen'night last, the 12th. This the Prince rejected *in toto*, exclaiming against its composition and style in the most sarcastic terms your Lordship can conceive; upon which Lord Eldon said he was sure that Mr. Perceval would most gladly adopt any alteration that his Royal Highness would propose—on which the Prince replied, that "he hoped he was too much of a gentleman to interfere with any man's style; that it was a great misfortune to Mr. Perceval to write in one which would disgrace a respectable washerwoman, but that he could not set up for his schoolmaster !"

The Prince then added, there is one vital mistake between me and Mr. Perceval, which pervades the whole of his paper: "he wishes the overture to be refused, I wish it to be accepted, and I will try what I can do myself to effect it."

The letter afterwards sent was produced on Thursday, the next day, and shewn both to Lord Wellesley and Perceval. The latter warmly remonstrated against it; the former, on the contrary, approved of it highly, and then took occasion to ask the Prince what subsequent course he meant to pursue, supposing this overture were accepted *in limine;* to which the Prince said, "as Lords Grenville and Grey would doubtless wish to confer themselves, I mean that you should act for *me*, and Perceval for *his* friends, in a meeting to be fixed as soon as possible." Lord Wellesley said that he would of course be happy to act for the Prince, but told him that if Perceval was also to be nominated, it must come to nothing; and so far prevailed as to induce the Prince to agree to Lord Moira's being substituted (in the above event) for Perceval.

I mention the above circumstances to show your Lordship that the Prince was in earnest in the proposition which took place; and, although no person living can defer to the judgment which dictated the answer to it, nor more approve its admirable statesmanlike tone and diction, still I must regret that the rejection was so peremptory, as I am as satisfied as I am of my existence, that had Lords Grenville and Grey come into contact with the Prince, which a single conference of the above nature would have brought about, Perceval's power would have crumbled into dust, and be gone for ever. In my view of this part of the subject, therefore, the refusal was premature. It would have been more popular, if not more wise, to have consented to hear in the first instance; it would have been always time enough to have broken off. Certain I am a contrary line would have saved the country, now dreadfully in the hazard.

But to return. On Friday, late at night, Lord Wellesley himself desired that letter to be written to me, of which I sent your Lordship the extract on Monday, not having received it time enough for Saturday's post. On Saturday, (15th) Lord Grenville's answer was returned, at which the Prince, annoyed and terrified at finding himself thrown upon the choice of a total break-up of the Government, or continuing Perceval, communicated to that gentleman his intention of retaining him; but not *before* he went to Manchester Square, whither he went about three on that day, and returned about five. In that interval, Lord Wellesley went to Carlton House by *appointment,* when an apology was made to him for the Prince's absence; and he remained with McMahon till half-past four exactly. In the course of the conversation which took place, McMahon told him that that very morning, the Prince told Lord Moira, in his presence, that, "let Perceval and his myrmidons do what they would, no earthly consideration should induce him to part with Wellesley, whom he could not go on without."

Just as Lord Wellesley was going to dinner at Apsley House, he received a communication from the Prince, that the difficulties which Lords Grenville and Grey's conduct had thrown upon him, had induced him to continue Perceval as his Minister! This bore date, "half-past 5 P.M." Lord Wellesley immediately wrote for permission to wait upon the Prince that night, which was conceded, and about nine he carried the Foreign Seals, with Culling Smith, to Carlton House.

As soon as he saw McMahon, he said, "Colonel McMahon, I have every reason to think you an honourable man, but as liable to be deceived as myself, or any other person. Were you aware of the contents of this note (showing him the recent communication), at the time I saw you this day, when you everything but assured me that I was to be the Prince's Minister?"

McMahon immediately turned pale and red, and in an agitation not to be described, assured Lord Wellesley that he was not only ignorant of the contents of it, but, to that moment, of the *change* in the Prince's mind—adding, "and I hope, my Lord, you will not, after what has passed, leave this house a Minister."

The Prince received Lord Wellesley with extreme agitation, which was not lessened when Lord Wellesley announced his having brought the Seals, and that he would not serve under Perceval *eight-and-forty hours*. The Prince grasped at this expression, and said, "I entreat of you, then, my dear Wellesley, as a personal favour to myself, that you will not resign for two or three days longer. The Chancellor shall call upon you to-morrow, and satisfy you that this arrangement with Perceval is merely *temporary*, and that I am entirely my own master, and untrammelled with respect to my choice of a government."

Lord Wellesley then returned home, and his friends were reassured in some degree, by what had passed, of his being yet the Prince's Minister.

On Sunday (16th) the Chancellor saw Lord Wellesley at Apsley House, about two in the afternoon. When, upon Lord Wellesley's beginning the discourse, by saying that he understood the Prince's continuance of Perceval was merely *temporary*, Lord Eldon said, "There must be some strange misapprehension in this business. I can assure your Lordship, from the Prince himself, that he (Perceval) is the Prince's *permanent* Minister, and it is upon this basis that I am to confer with you!" Lord Wellesley continuing steady in his determination, the interview was of short continuance.

As the Chancellor was about to leave, Lord Wellesley said, "My Lord, I must express to you my great satisfaction at Mr. Perceval's choosing that you, and not himself, should be the channel of this negociation. I beg of you, when you see him, to tell him, from me, that his recent conduct towards me has been unmannerly, disrespectful, and contrary to the tenour of his own professions to me; and such has been my sense of his behaviour, that, had he come into my presence, whilst still a member of government, I could not answer for the consequences; but so soon as I am no longer in office, so much obliged shall I feel myself for his having been the cause of removing me from the degrading situation of serving under him, that all resentment towards him *shall entirely cease.*"

On Tuesday the Anhalt mail brought Lord Wellesley favourable news from Sweden; and in the evening about eight, he was writing to apprise the Prince thereof, when he received a letter from the Chancellor, enclosing one from the Prince, agreeing to accept the Foreign Seals at one the next day at Carlton House. At a later hour in the evening T. Tyrwhitt came from the Prince to Lord Wellesley with an infinity of fair words, and holding out Ireland. "What," said Lord Wellesley, "with Perceval in the front. No—no," and rejected it with disdain. Accordingly on Wednesday (19th) at one p.m., Lord Wellesley proceeded to Carlton House in the highest style, state liveries, and full dress, and delivered up the said Seals to the Prince, which were delivered to my Lord Liverpool, who was summoned to receive them, and who came for that purpose *in his boots.*

On this occasion, the Prince was, or appeared to be, *deeply* affected, and almost unable to speak. He deplored the necessity of the separation—*still hoped it would be but for a time*—and said he would bear public and private testimony, upon every occasion, to the ability, zeal, &c., &c., of the Marquis, and to his personal kindness towards him (the Prince). To all this Lord Wellesley, after expressing himself in general terms, said that, presuming upon his late responsible situation, the great favour shown him upon all occasions by the Prince, and his inherent rights as a Counsellor of the Crown, he once more conjured the Regent not to make a Government upon the principle of excluding the Catholics from their just rights, which would virtually be the case if he continued Perceval. That he could still try to bring about an union between his early friends and such of the present people as were not obstinate upon that point, by getting Lord Moira to interfere; with whom, for many reasons, Lords Grenville and Grey would be disposed to treat; and that if even he would name Lord Moira the head of his government, if it were only with reference to the subject of Ireland alone, it might yet save the country; adding nearly these (I think) memorable words: "This wretched set of people, Sir, who refuse to listen to the claims, the wishes, or even to the prejudices of such a portion of your subjects as the Irish Catholics, ought as statesmen to be driven into the ranks of private life, and as men governed by selfish motives alone, should be hooted out of society."

What effect these "last words" have had, your Lordship is already aware of. Upon various occasions since, the Prince has spoken of Lord Wellesley in his usual strain; and has announced to Culling Smith his intention of placing him at the *head* of some of the Public Boards, or *at* some of them —I forget which.

In the secret history of the Court of England, we doubt whether a more edifying chapter can be found than that which relates the political alliance of the Marquis Wellesley and Mr. Canning, its development and fate. Each of these remarkable men possessed intellectual powers of a high order, with great capacity for ministerial office. The exalted position held by the Marquis in India, may have given him the more commanding influence; but the frequent displays of oratorical talent in the House of Commons by Mr. Canning, had secured for him a position among existing statesmen, scarcely less exalted. At what time they first felt for each other that intense admiration which induced them to combine their interests, cannot be accurately determined; but there seems to be little question that they mutually entertained the idea, that with the other's assistance the highest official honours were within their grasp. We are not prepared to say that this conviction made Lord Wellesley so readily abandon his Indian vice-royalty and return to England; but, in his subsequent transactions, quite sufficient of the Canning influence is betrayed, to show in what direction lay the magnet which governed his movements. The progress of that elaborated scheme by which the Foreign Secretary of 1809 sought to elevate himself to the direction of the Cabinet, after having secured the co-operation of a new colleague in Lord Wellesley, its illusory success in the retirement of Lord Castlereagh, its signal failure in his own resignation, has been already told.[1] He lost ground considerably in public opinion by the exposure of his conduct, and he fell equally in the estimation of public men. These evils, however, appear to have been regarded by the Marquis Wellesley as so many strong claims on his gratitude; and, from the moment he accepted the post of Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, he commenced that policy, the object of which was to bring back Mr. Canning to the Administration. The obstacles he encountered would have disheartened a less enterprising spirit; but, impressed with a sense of his own superiority, and urged on by a conviction of his increasing influence with the Prince Regent, his desire took the form of a determination.

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[1] "Court and Cabinets of George III.," Vol. IV., p. 364.

It must be acknowledged that the Marquis strove earnestly to acquire the ascendancy he sought. Hence the long and frequent interviews with the Regent, and the unfolding of the grand scheme of continental policy which elicited the Prince's cordial admiration. He can scarcely be blamed for believing the assurances of his royal master that he held the first place in his regard, or for acting upon the evidences he had continued to receive from December, that he was selected at an early date to supersede Mr. Perceval as the first Minister of the Crown. The perusal of the series of secret despatches, written apparently by his confidential friend, published in this and the preceding chapters, must satisfy any one that he had sufficient reason to be sanguine that he was master of the situation. Unfortunately for the realization of his designs, he was over-confident. He ventured to insist upon their execution, with the alternative of his secession from the Government; and, to his astonishment and discomfiture, the alternative was at once accepted.

It may with little difficulty be imagined what were his feelings when he found that all those grand schemes and imposing combinations which he had so glowingly laid before the head of the State, had evaporated like a mist before the morning sun, leaving so slight a sense of their value in the mind that had recently received them so cordially, that their inventor was suffered to withdraw from all share in their development, with as little regret as might have attended the dismissal of an obscure subordinate. He will again be found taking a prominent share in Carlton House negociations ; but for a brief interval only. It subsequently became evident that his disappointment was most bitter. Not less so, perhaps, was that of his intended colleague, who had the additional mortification of seeing the man he had endeavoured to supersede in favour of a powerful ally, attain the influence and position both had forfeited. We dwell upon this incident in the history of two of the cleverest men of their day, that the moral it conveys may have the better chance of leaving its proper impression.

From the consideration of home complications, the reader must snatch a cursory glance at what is going on on the coast of Spain.

ADMIRAL FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

'Ganges' at anchor off Ferrol, March 2, 1812.

My Lord,

I wrote to you very fully by the 'Tartar,' but conclude the letters must have been lost with that ship on the Points. We are still here, our squadron at this instant consisting of nine sail of the line and 'Niobe' frigate. Sir Edward Pellew is to be relieved by Sutton, in the 'Mars,' but the wise people who sent him, forgot there was a senior captain to him here, Manley, of the 'Spartiate,' the consequence is, that Mather is taking the stores and provisions from the 'Spartiate,' who will return to Plymouth. The 'Ardent' will go to Beechhaven, which will again reduce us to our number six. The wind has been easterly the whole of this moon; we continue to get good supplies of beef, and the water is nearly complete in most of the ships, and very few sick. We frequently take a walk on shore, and can look down into St. Philips, the arsenal, &c. How we failed in the last expedition I cannot imagine, under Sir William Pulteney, I mean.

The Spaniards are very attentive, and certainly keep themselves perfectly neuter; some trifling disagreements respecting the port have happened, but terminated in our favour. Several of our officers have been to Corunna, and dined at a table-d'hôte with the French officers, who, on all occasions, conduct themselves with great propriety; they complain generally of want of stores, and means to enforce discipline. Our guard boat from this ship one night rowed round the Frenchmen in Ferrol, who reported that a very good look-out was kept on board them, men on each yard-arm, and bowsprit-end, the boats manned alongside, and hailing each other every half hour. Whilst they are under such apprehensions in port, I fancy we have little cause to suspect they will face us at sea. Whenever the wind shifts, I conclude we shall go again into Betanzos; prior to our anchoring in that bay, the Spaniards would neither give us supplies, nor have intercourse, so that the whole of the change in their conduct is to be attributed to our imposing force, and anchoring in their port without asking permission. Great credit is certainly due to Sir Edward Pellew, for his decision on this point, on which subject he had wrote to the Commander-in-chief, or Admiralty, without getting any answer. It becomes so much our interest in every respect to keep up the good understanding that at present prevails, that I have no doubt Sutton will endeavour to continue in the path of his predecessor. The climate is delightful, and the ships generally getting into good order. The news of the King's indisposition reached us only three days ago; it caused a universal sensation among us, and we are anxiously waiting for information. We are now here eleven weeks, 'Malta' twenty, and completing her provisions again; we all like the station so well that no complaints are made, and I make no doubt that Pellew will come back immediately.

Pellew writes me word he will go on Sunday, I shall, therefore, conclude this, as he will go directly. I can imagine that during these times of uncertainty your active mind is sufficiently employed. I confess, without presuming to know much more than the newspapers convey, it is an anxious moment. With best respects and regards to all your family, I beg you will believe how faithfully and sincerely I am always,

Your Lordship's most obliged and obedient servant,

T. F. FREMANTLE.

A new light again flickers over the dark clouds of political intrigue, and occasionally shows the Prince

Regent to more advantage than he has hitherto been exhibited, but it passes off rather like a meteor than a sunbeam, and again all is involved in distorting ministerial fog.

—— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

March 3, 1812.

Lord Wellesley has asked an audience from the Prince, for the purpose of obtaining his leave to give his reasons in his place for resigning, which there is reason to think will not be refused him: he expected to be admitted this day, and the first opportunity which occurs, *or whenever one is given him*, he will go into the subject at length, in the House of Lords. In addition to what he said to the Prince on his resignation, as stated by me in my last note to your Lordship, were these words; "I can see my way through all the mischief which can possibly accrue to the empire, by conceding every tittle of the Catholic claims:—but neither I nor any man living can calculate the extent of the mischief which must ensue from an opposite line of conduct. And were I now put to my choice to grant them everything without further deliberating upon the measure, or withholding them even for a Session, I would adopt the former."

Lord Castlereagh has been twice with Lord Wellesley yesterday for four hours, and there is great civility in that quarter.

On Saturday last Perceval proposed W. Pole for the Cabinet, which the Prince peremptorily refused, saying he could not think of suffering it, unless Lord Wellesley was at the head of the Government, or at least formed a part of it. When Perceval was gone, the Prince said: "Does he think I mean to reward one brother for abandoning another?" He also desired a person to ask Mr. Perceval from him, what was the reason he (Perceval) had brought down forty-seven people to vote for *Ministers* on the State of the Nation, who all voted against *him* (the Prince) on McMahon's business.[1] Every soul about the Prince is the direct enemy of Perceval, except the Hertford Association, of whom horrible reports are abroad.

Affairs in the Peninsula daily created more earnest attention at home; indeed the stake had become so heavy, that the spectators had almost a vital interest in the game. How admirably it was played may be gathered from the following trustworthy sources;[2]—the first writer was a staff officer, who subsequently rose to a high position in his profession.

CAPTAIN BERKELEY TO ADMIRAL BERKELEY.

Elvas, March 30, 1812.

My dearest Father,

Your letter of the 28th, I have this instant received, having arrived by the post this evening, I have not been able to send you even a sketch of Badajoz, as the Guadiana carried away the pontoon bridge, and all communication was cut off; the bridge was, however, re-established the day before yesterday, and last night we received an order to march to this place, and this evening another order to march to Valverde to-morrow, which is beyond Olivença, and in the direction of General Graham's corps, but rather more to the right than he is. We are still ignorant of the particulars of the assault of the Picurina, except that it was taken, and I believe the people were rather surprised afterwards to find out, how it had been possible to take it, it being so much stronger than was supposed. St. Christoval and Mon Cœur made a sortie last night upon the 30th regiment, and the Algarva Brigade, and were driven back with the loss of their commanding officer killed, and some others. We did not lose a man. Fort Picurina is upon a commanding ground, and our second parallel runs through it, one breaching battery, opened this morning of eight guns, and another is to open to-morrow morning, consisting of twelve guns, both of them between Fort Picurina and the town, and the most sanguine are in hopes that the breach will be practicable by the 4th or 5th of April. George Macleod was wounded the night of the assault of La Picurina; it will be a tedious recovery I am afraid, as the musket ball has struck the shin bone and glanced round; the bone is not broken, however, and he is doing as well as possible. General Leith takes in the newspapers, and I have seen them to the 10th November. If we move beyond Valverde, I will write by every opportunity, but I do not think we shall go much farther; it is only five leagues from hence; this, however, depends a good deal upon whether Soult is coming up in any force or not.

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[1] "Febuary 24.—In the course of the last summer, the Prince appointed his secretary, Colonel McMahon, to the office of 'Paymaster of Widow's Pensions,' which had become vacant by the death of General Fox. The office produces about £2,700 a-year to the holder of it; but it is a complete sinecure, and the propriety of abolishing it has been stated in several Reports of Committees of the House of Commons. The House this day, on the motion of Mr. Bankes, refused to vote the money to pay the salary of the office. The numbers on the division were 115 and 112, so that the Ministers were in a minority of 3."—Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly, Vol. III., p. 12.

[2] More full accounts may be found in the fourth volume of "Napier's History," and in the ninth of the "Wellington Despatches."

My very best love to my mother and sister, and believe me, my dearest father, ever, your most affectionate son,

G. Berkeley.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lisbon, April 4, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,

I believe the shortest way of giving you the news, is by inclosing my son's last letter, which, as it contains a rough sketch of the operations, will enable you to judge more of the siege of Badajoz. And I hope before the mail goes, to add a postscript of its fall, as the most recent advices state an intercepted letter of the Governor's, which expresses his fears of being compelled to surrender, if not relieved; and as relief appears impracticable, I think he will not stand a storm, especially as he is an old French soldier, has robbed a great deal, and his booty is all with him—which, if he persists in standing the event of a storm, will of course be lost to him, but which may be secured by a capitulation. The measures which Lord Wellington has taken has completely cut off the communication between the armies of Soult and Marmont, except by the circuitous route of Cordova and Madrid; to which places, report states the garrison of Seville to be marching, and the siege of Cadiz to be raised; the last, however, wants confirmation. But as the Imperial Guards (which were the best troops in the army) are marched for France, I should not wonder if the enemy were obliged to act on the defensive this summer, and possibly may be driven out of the Peninsula by the fortunate star of Lord Wellington.

I have been deprived of seeing the siege of Badajoz, which I proposed, and had all my relays of horses on the road—by a most awkward and troublesome accident. The rowells of my spur, in taking off my boot, struck into my leg, exactly upon the spot in which I was wounded on the first of June, and has completely opened that wound, which was a most troublesome one at the time; and I am confined to my bed, which the doctors say is the best place; and as I command a view of all the port and entrance, they console me by saying I can carry on the duty, and satisfy my impatience just as well; and I am therefore obliged to be content. I am still in the dark with respect to myself; as I have received no official notice of my probable removal. I believe Lord Wellington has endeavoured, by remonstrances, to convince them of the impolicy of changing the command at so critical a period, and where my successor would have his lesson to learn at a moment when its execution was most required; and I believe he has done me the justice to say that my co-operations have been most satisfactory to him. This, however, may possibly be of no avail, as I have so many proofs of the total incapacity and want of knowledge of the service of the late Admiralty, that I shall not wonder at any detrimental measure they may have pursued. I see a book wrote by George;[1] pray tell him that I take it very ill, that his view of Portugal in verse has never been sent to me. And with all our most affectionate love to you and yours,

I remain, ever yours, most sincerely and affectionately,

George Berkeley.

There is an amusing anecdote of the Regent and his negociations preserved in one of Moore's letters to Miss Godfrey. "When he [Lord Moira] told the Prince that in a very short time he should make his bow and quit the country, this precious gentleman began to blubber (as he did once when he was told that Brummel did not like the cut of his coat) and said, 'you'll desert me then, Moira.'

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[1] "Portugal," a Poem. By Lord George Grenville,

'No Sir,' says he, 'when the friends and counsels you have chosen shall have brought your throne to totter beneath you; you will then see me by your side, to sit, if it should so please God, under its ruins with you.'"[1]

On the 16th of March, not only the Grenville family but a very extensive and distinguished circle, experienced an irreparable loss in the death, after a brief illness, of the Marchioness of Buckingham, who, in her own right had been created Baroness Nugent, with limitation to her second son, Lord George Grenville, henceforth known as Lord Nugent. Her accomplishments were no less brilliant than her virtues; her taste in art raised her above her amateur contemporaries, and her benevolence rendered her name honoured and revered in every place to which her influence could penetrate.

On the 26th of March, there was a numerous meeting of the Livery of the City of London, at Guildhall, to consider the state of the country; and twelve resolutions were carried, adverse to the policy of the Government, and praying the Regent to dismiss his ministers. On the 17th of April, there was a meeting of the Common Council, when the Orders in Council were severely animadverted on, and resolutions, and an address to the Prince Regent, carried by a considerable majority. On the 28th, the latter was publicly presented to the Prince by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs, and Common Council; to which his Royal Highness was pleased to return "a most gracious answer."

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[1] Memoirs, Vol. I., p. 272.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, April 8, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

We were setting out for town this morning, when I received letters to say that the Catholic Question is postponed for at least another week. It seems that the Board in Dublin has resolved that their petitions to Parliament shall not be presented till after the presentation of that to the Prince Regent; and as this will not be in London time enough for next Thursday, the whole must wait till the Thursday following, and if the Prince Regent chooses to be ill, or to be elsewhere amused, on that day, I do not see what is to prevent a farther delay at his pleasure.

I suppose you will have heard that the Prince Regent is now engaged in an active and personal canvass against the Catholics, and that his brothers of Clarence and Kent have yielded to his arguments.

Letters from the army describe, it is said, the probability of a battle for Badajoz.

Among the appointments announced in the Gazette from the 4th to the 8th of April, were the Earl of Buckinghamshire, Earl of Liverpool, Viscount Castlereagh, and the Right Honourable Richard Ryder, as Secretaries of State. The Right Honourable Spencer Perceval, Chancellor, and Under Treasurer of the Exchequer: with Lords Lovaine, Teignmouth, and Lowther, and the Right Honourable John Sullivan, Commissioners for Affairs in India; and, *at last*, Viscount Sidmouth, Lord President of the Privy Council.

CHAPTER X.

[1812.]

CAPTURE OF BADAJOZ — MR. GRATTAN'S MOTION RESPECTING THE CATHOLICS OF IRELAND—CANNING—LORD CASTLEREAGH—WHITBREAD, WELLESLEY POLE, PONSONBY, AND PERCEVAL — VACILLATION AT CARLTON HOUSE—DISTURBED STATE OF THE COUNTRY—ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD—ALARMING RIOTS IN THE NORTH—COMMITTEE ON THE ORDERS IN COUNCIL—LOSS AT BADAJOZ—THE PRINCE REGENT'S ENTERTAINMENT TO THE QUEEN—HIS LOSS OF POPULARITY — THE BARRACKS IN MARYLEBONE PARK — SINECURE OFFICES — ASSASSINATION OF MR. PERCEVAL — CHARACTER OF THAT MINISTER—POLITICAL RUMOURS — A MINISTERIAL DEAD-LOCK—LORD GREY ON THE PRESENT POSTURE OF AFFAIRS—THE PRINCE REGENT'S OPINION OF LORD GRENVILLE—EXECUTION OF BELLINGHAM.

CHAPTER X.

THE Sebastopol of the Peninsula, that had long baffled the valour of the British troops, and the skill of their commander, was at last taken by assault after a desperate conflict, the particulars of which form one of the most animated chapters in the history of the war.[1] The important announcement was immediately forwarded, with other intelligence, to Stowe.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

April 23, 1812.

You will probably hear from other quarters, that there is a telegraph account that Badajoz is taken by storm. Of course nothing known of the particulars. No other news but what you will see in the papers, of the Anhalt Mail.

The Austrian alliance with Bonaparte, has, of course, caused very much surprise here. I do not believe it was at all expected.

I have just seen the Chancellor at the House of Lords, and he told me there was bad news from the country, particularly from Manchester. I had not any opportunity to inquire the particulars.

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[1] See "Napier's History," Vol. IV., p. 100, and "Wellington Despatches," Vol. IX., p. 36.

Our question on the Orders of Council is put off again till Tuesday sen'night. There is a report about the town, of a duel between Donoughmore and Yarmouth, but Lord Castlereagh says there is no truth in it. The officer with Lord Wellington's despatches is expected this day. It fell on the 6th.

One portion of Lord Temple's communication to his father, is taken up with a description of the debate in the House of Commons, on Mr. Grattan's motion for a Committee to inquire into the State of the Penal Laws, as they affected the Catholics of Ireland; the other conveys as vivid a picture of that ever-varying kaleidescope, the mind of the Prince Regent.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Wednesday, April 25, 1812.

My dear Father,

I preferred waiting until the debate had closed, to writing during its continuance. The result has been most triumphant to us. Our numbers were greater than we had any right to expect, and the debate was entirely favourable to us. You will have seen that Perceval set up Nicholls to raise the "No Popery cry," to feel the pulse of the House. There is an idea that had the House answered the whip, Perceval meant to have moved an amendment, committing the House to an exclusion of the Catholic claims. The pack, however, ran mute, Nicholls got no encouragement, and Perceval soon saw that had he made any such attempt, he inevitably would have been beat. Canning's speech was very brilliant, though unequal, and by the weakness of the ground which he took for voting against his speech, he lost the credit in the House which his speech had gained him. His attack upon Perceval, and all the "No Popery" measures, in which he had himself participated, was most masterly. He, however, closed, by saying, that the Catholic claims could not, he thought, be safely conceded until all prejudices were drove away, and the concession could be made with unanimity. In his arguments in favour of the Catholics, he went further than Wellesley, but the prospect which he held out to them was not so favourable a one, as that offered them by the latter.

Castlereagh declared himself equally as friendly to the Catholics as Canning. His speech was a more reasonable one. He deprecated bringing forward the question until the guards necessary to be placed round the establishment, and the constitution could be arranged, and the outline of the plan given by those who wished to pledge the House to the principle. Both supported the application by government of the law, but Canning doubted whether, *à priori*, he should have thought the law had extended to a meeting such as that which had been put down. Canning took Lord Grenville's line upon the veto, and upon the propriety of not tying the Catholics down to this or that particular measure, but generally taking care that the guards should be sufficient. Castlereagh thought the Catholics should be called upon to declare what would satisfy them; Canning thought that whatever was right should be done, without consultation with them. Both agreed that the menacing tone taken up by the Catholics, made it impossible to agree to the motion.

Whitbread's attack upon both these personages was masterly, especially that upon Canning. He upbraided them both with taking advantage of the cry of "No Popery," when it could carry them to power, and with adopting the contrary cry when they were out of power, and could not give their opinions the weight of official assistance.

Wellesley Pole made a miserable figure. He chose to consider himself as the only figure upon the canvas, the question as only concerning his conduct, the House as only interested in his defence. He accordingly entered into it with a minute asperity and puerile waspishness, quite amusing. Ponsonby told him he put him in mind of Pope's "Life and Adventures of P. P., the Clerk of the Parish," proving the high estimation of a little man in his own eyes. This poke told, and P. P. was fool enough to be angry with it. Ponsonby's speech was very dignified, very good, and made a stronger impression than any I have heard him make.

Perceval was weaker than I ever knew him, and evidently made the speech of a *falling Minister*. This struck every one as well as myself. He re-stated his former opinions to their full extent, and declared his adherence to them. No cheering except from one side of the House followed this declaration. His friends looked blank, as considering it the mark and signal of his fall. His defence of the conduct of the Irish Government was weak to a degree. They were told the construction of the law was such as they had acted upon, by their sworn law officers, and, therefore, they were obliged to act upon it accordingly. Then the Attorney-General is Minister, and not Perceval! He floundered and stammered through the whole of his speech, and evidently showed how much he felt the want of the warm cheers which used to back him.

Nothing could exceed the vacillation of Carlton House. On the first day, contradictory orders to its members in the House of Commons succeeded each other with a most amusing rapidity. At one time they received directions to vote with us, if the debate was confined merely to the Catholic Question, but to vote against us if we attacked the conduct of the Irish Government. These orders were, however, soon countermanded, and they all voted steadily against us under all circumstances. The division, however, is well calculated to bring *him* to his senses, as all *his friends* voted with us, and out of the ninety-four majority against us, more than half stand pledged to support the pure Catholic Question, when it comes on backed by the petitions which are coming over. What appears *evident* is, that the present Government can exist no longer. What then will succeed? Nobody can now think that Perceval can go on upon the "No Popery" ground with the Sidmouths, and Castlereagh cannot now join them.

The next resort which the Prince has, is Wellesley and Canning. This evidently never can carry the business on in the House of Commons, with Perceval in a state even of lukewarm support or neutrality. Wellesley has lost his weight in the country, and Canning his consideration as a statesman in the House of Commons. Then, will *he* go to Lords Grenville and Grey? I think he will. He is so alarmed, that I think it will cost his nerves less to take them in, than in his present circumstances to form any other arrangement. *I have reason to believe* his determination at the present moment, so far as he has dared to form any, is to send for Lords Grenville and Grey, to attempt to obtain from them a postponement of the Catholic Question. Upon this being refused him, he will sell his concession upon that point as dear as possible, and with it purchase the control of the army, and other objects personal to himself. If such is the offer, I think the bargain ought to be closed. I know not quite how far prejudices have subsided sufficiently in the minds of some of our friends, to allow them to *taste* the admission of Wellesley and Canning into partnership. I find Lord Lansdowne, with whom I have had a very long and confidential communication, fully convinced that they *ought to be,* and *must be* admitted. His views respecting the war upon the Peninsula, are precisely *yours*; and I cannot but hope that his influence will have weight.

Such are the details of the present aspect of things here. Under these circumstances, I do not think it right to leave town until things have a little taken their shape. I meant to have spoken, but I gave way the first night to George, who acquitted himself extremely well; and the second night the press for speaking was so great, that I had no means of putting myself forward until it was too late to speak with any effect. I was up, but Parnell was anxious to read a speech which he had got written ready for the Queen's County; and afterwards I had no other opportunity.

God bless you, my dear father, and believe me, ever yours, dutifully and affectionately,

Ch. T.

It is evident from the statements to be found in the following letters, that the Prince Regent's embarrassments were increasing; the state of the country was indeed becoming alarming, and riotous demonstrations in the manufacturing districts were on the increase. Great distress prevailed among the labouring classes, of which mob orators took advantage to inflame the minds of the people against the Government.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 8, 1812.

The arrangements are considered to be made, and are as follows. The King to remain at Windsor, to have his privy purse of £60,000, an additional £60,000. The Queen to have £10,000 additional, to keep up the Queen's house, and her present allowance of £50,000; the whole making £180,000, upon which the establishment at Windsor is to be maintained for the King, and herself, and Princesses. The King's Household to consist of four Lords—St. Helens. Arden, Somerville, and Rivers; four grooms: Sir H. Neale, Admiral Legge, General Campbell, and Mr. Greville; all his Equerries: Lord Winchelsea, as Chamberlain with a white wand; and Lord Thyn, as Deputy under him—both for this establishment only. Colonel Taylor to remain on his present salary, and to be at the head of a Board of three, to aid it, and arrange the payments; to consist of Lord Winchelsea, Count Munster, and himself, with a secretary, who is to be Colonel Stephenson, who was in the Duke of Cumberland's household, and dismissed after the attempt made upon his life. The Prince is, I understand, to give out of his salary, as Prince of Wales, the additional £60,000 to the King, and the residue of that allowance to go to the continuation of the liquidation of his debt, as formerly arranged. The debts incurred by the Prince since, which are said to be only £100,000, are to be defrayed by an offer of that sum, by way of present, at the commencement of his establishment; and this to be all the money advanced by the public for these arrangements. The Prince, it is understood, takes all the remainder of the King's establishment; so that he will only have four lords and four grooms to appoint—unless he changes the great Officers of State.

Perceval has this moment given notice that he shall bring in the Bill for this arrangement on Thursday next.

No accounts of the 'St. George' and 'Defence;' those that arrived from the North Seas give every reason to believe them lost.

I find most of the Irish very averse to the Catholic Question coming on before the restrictions are taken away.

W. H. F.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, May 2, 1812.

My dear Lord,

Great impression has been made by the arrival of a second messenger from France, but I am confident without any ground of hope in any ultimate advantage. The idea is peace, or some arrangement of a commercial nature with France. The first is quite hopeless, and the second most improbable at a moment when Bonaparte knows the severity under which we are suffering by his system of prohibition. But I have no doubt our Ministers will endeavour to keep on this negociation, which is well suited to their object, in diverting public attention from the overwhelming dangers which threaten us.

The accounts from different parts of the north of England still continue to be most frightful. Government has at last taken the alarm, and are marching the Militias, and all the troops they can muster, towards Lancashire and Yorkshire. There is a very strong impression, and I don't know upon what it is grounded, that on Monday next there is to be a combined and formidable rising in those disturbed counties and in London. The Government is acting upon this impression; and I should hope, if it were in agitation, that it will be prevented. A special commission is appointed for trying the rioters at Stockport, &c., to be held at Chester, and Dallas is the judge. They have got some of the principal leaders, whom they have no doubt of convicting. But after all, I very much fear that unless the trade can by some means or other be opened, and provisions procured, all the rigour and force which can be used will only for a moment keep down the disturbances, which will at last break out with redoubled force. The greatest of all apprehensions arises from the weakness of our military force; for it is impossible, in the disposition and turn which these disturbances have taken, that you can depend on the local military establishments.

The Ministers think they have shown great dexterity, and triumph in having granted the committee on the Orders in Council. I am afraid it will turn out an unlucky triumph, and a very weak policy, because I am sure it will disgust the public, and add to that indifference (if it may not be called contempt) in which the House of Commons is held. It is, however, a strong demonstration of the weakness of the Government, and has undoubtedly given that impression. I believe it to have been the first measure proposed by Lord Sidmouth's influence; and it certainly is one that has not been generally approved by the friends of Government.

We had an exceeding good debate and division on the barracks question, yesterday; and should have divided better, if it had not been for a most mischievous and wicked speech of Sir F. Burdett, which Perceval of course took advantage of, and which drove some of our friends away, and induced others to divide against us. The Marylebone Park is a most profligate job altogether of the Prince of Wales's, who is full of these military plans, and of the Canal which he supports merely because it has his name.

The accounts brought to Plymouth, if true, puts the question of the state of Spain completely at ease; for they report that the siege of Cadiz is broken up, and Seville in possession of Ballesteros, and Soult retreated towards the north. I cannot yet give credit to the extent of these statements, because, although Badajoz is taken, yet the operation had so crippled Lord Wellington's force, that he could not have been prepared to advance southward, threatened as he was by Marmont on the north. The whole of the British force put hors de combat for a time, by the Badajoz attack, amounts to upwards of eight thousand men; and there is not the means of supplying the deficiency. Two regiments have been sent from Cadiz, and probably they may get one from Gibraltar: but the weakness of the regiments with Lord Wellington's army, is not to be believed. General Grenville told me, as an instance, that his regiment is not now more in effective than two hundred men.

It is not, however, alone from the deficiency of troops, that we shall fail; the difficulty of pecuniary supplies must arrive shortly; every hour demonstrates more and more, that we cannot go on in this scale of expense; and it is becoming more evident to the public at large, that our exertions are much beyond our means. We have raised this year, in taxes and loans, ninety-eight millions of money; and it now appears that we have an unfunded issue to the amount of fifty-four millions; which, of course, if funded, would have added to the necessity of a further levy of near three millions; and even this, as you well know, has not nearly covered our expense. There is great difficulty in the Treasury, to arrange the new loan with the city: the idea is, that Perceval means to borrow from the sinking fund; but nothing yet has transpired.

You have seen by the papers, the Prince's entertainment to the Queen, on Thursday night. I was present. Of course it was most magnificent. Lady Hertford was a very principal feature, to whom he paid much attention. The only persons of Opposition whom I saw, were Lord and Lady Stafford (not Lord Gower), Duke of Devonshire, Lord Morpeth and Lady Georgiana, Lord and Lady Albemarle, Lord and Lady Jersey (asked, but could not come), Lord and Lady Besborough—but not Lord Moira, or Erskine, or Lauderdale, or Sheridan, or even Adam. I endeavoured to watch his behaviour to his Ministers, which was certainly very far from being cordial: he spoke very little to any of them; his sole attention was to the Queen; and when not attending upon her, to the Hertford family. Lord Hertford was *en fonction* with his wand; and Lord Yarmouth giving directions to the servants and attendants. Princess Charlotte of Wales, after sitting for some little time next the Queen, sent for Lady Albemarle to come to her, with whom she seemed to display more intimacy, than with any other person.

To show the sort of falsehood of the Prince, I just give you this trait—he came up to Lord Albemarle in my hearing, who was sitting with the Duke of Buccleugh, and after saying a few words, he pulled out his snuff-box and presented it to the Duke, saying, "You must take a pinch, for it is out of Albemarle's box. (In truth it was a box Lord Albemarle had given him in days of intimacy,) and which he must have put into his pocket on purpose to make this sort of speech, which, considering what had lately passed between him and Lord Albemarle, was certainly a most unnecessary display of affected friendship. He was outrageous at the division on the Catholic Question. When he came to the drawing-room on Thursday, he was in his state coach with all the parade of royalty and grandeur, and there were upwards of ten thousand people in Pall Mall, through which he passed, and where he was not met by one single token of applause. It was a dead silence throughout. At the play the other night, when Henry V. was acted, all the allusions to his breach of promise, when Prince of Wales, were thundered with applause, and in the new play which is now acting at the Lyceum, there are some allusions to female influence in Government, which are constantly met by clapping and applause.

The addresses on his assumption of the Regency, have failed throughout England, and there is hardly a quarter in which the attempt has not been made to procure them.

Adieu, my dear Lord,
W. H. F.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, May 6, 1812.

My dear Lord,

There is nothing new that I have heard. Probably this change of weather will bring accounts from Portugal, for which every one is most impatient. You will have seen that the Government were beaten on the Sinecure Office Bill—there never was a bill so full of absurdity and impracticability; but the object of it was one which the House of Commons are now wild upon. It will, however, most undoubtedly be thrown out in the Lords. Perceval argued it very ill. The examination of witnesses on the Orders of Council, goes on with great advantage to the opponents of those orders, and promises to make a very strong and powerful case. Stephen, who conducts the examination for the Government, got very impatient and fretful with the witnesses, and yesterday put so violent and intemperate a question to one of them, that a motion was made to expurge it, which was lost only by five—seventy-five to seventy.

Ward has given notice of an address to the Prince Regent to suspend the erection of the barracks in Marylebone Park, for Tuesday next; we shall probably have an exceeding good division upon it, as it is a most unpopular measure, and is solely a whim of the Regent's. He had not nerves to go to the Royal Society dinner. He had presented them with a lamp a few days previous, and on the day of the dinner he sent a message to Lord Stafford, to beg that, when his health was drank, he would say something respecting this lamp, which he should be glad to change or alter in any way the Society might wish, if it did not suit. Lord Stafford accordingly did say a few words, but, notwithstanding all this trick on his part, it completely failed, and he did not receive one token of applause.

You may probably have heard that he has made a new list for the *droit d'entrée* at Carlton House, in which he has struck out the name of Lord Moira and all his old friends and councillors, with the exception, I think, of Lord Albemarle, and one other, whom I don't recollect. After declaring publicly, right and left, his intention of going to the Lord Mayor, his nerves failed him, and he sent an excuse. I am confident he would have been hissed through the city. Lyttleton was most severe and personal toward Yarmouth, the other night. Lord Donoughmore has published his speech, but all this is submitted to.

W. H. F.

It had been customary, for a long period, to reward deserving servants of the Crown, instead of with pensions, which demanded from the recipient no duties, by naming them to particular offices, the duties of which might either be performed by deputy, or were of a merely nominal character. Whigs and Tories had equally profited by this arrangement, without its having been considered in the slightest degree derogatory or questionable. But now, some politicians affected to regard it as a high crime and misdemeanour, and the Marquis of Buckingham was singled out for assault, for deriving emolument from one of these appointments. It so happened, however, that Mr. Creevy's motion respecting the Tellerships of the Exchequer, was supported by a very small minority.

RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 7, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

I could not so honestly have advised you to make the sacrifice in question, if I had not been eager to take of it, even beyond the proposition that your letter alludes to. I am always scandalized at the injustice of your being selected as the object of sinecure hostility, merely on the score of the amount; when, in truth, and in fact, upon every principle of reason and justice, my office, and every other sinecure is equally liable to every remark which is made on yours, and there is nothing I so much wish for as to find any means of avowing this opinion, and of claiming for the Chief Justice in Eyre, my share as Chief Justice of that sinecure odium which is always heaped upon you.

Being confined with a cold in my head, I could not go to Holland House to-day, but have writ to Holland, and enclose to you his answer. I suspect it will not suit you, because it is horizontal, but it may be worth your while to write to Mr. Piercall, to know his price for your proposed upright fence, as some check to enable you to judge of the demand from the other manufacturers.

My brother comes to-morrow, and means to return Wednesday. He is to see Lord Wellesley. I suppose it will end in Lord Wellesley being with us, and in Canning being with himself. Lord Castlereagh told Elliot there would be no business, and that they should adjourn to February. G. Neville tells me the Carysforts are come to town.

An event was impending that threatened very greatly to aggravate the embarrassments of the Prince of Wales; this was the assassination of his Minister, which occurred on the 11th of May, as he was entering the lobby of the House of Commons. The murderer, Bellingham, was an applicant for a recompense from Government, for losses he had experienced in Russia, and as Mr. Perceval had refused to listen to his grievances, the madman waylaid him with a pistol, and shot him through the heart. Such an act, perpetrated in broad day, upon a person holding so eminent a position, united all parties in indignation against the criminal; but horror of the crime, and sympathy for its victim, hastened the proceedings of justice, and in a few days after committing the deed, Bellingham was tried, found guilty, condemned and executed.

The same intemperance influenced the political friends of the Minister, who stopped the business of the nation, while they lavished pensions on his family, and voted funds for a public monument in his honour. No one could blame even the strongest expression of indignation and horror at so violent a catastrophe; but such a fate, however undeserved, did not confer on the deceased minister a claim to greater honours than had rewarded the eminent public services of Chatham and Pitt. Perceval was certainly not a great statesman, nor yet a great man. With considerable talent, he possessed many amiable qualities, that, in a more wholesome atmosphere might have caused his character to approach a high moral standard; but in the course of his career, he accomplished so little worthy of remembrance, that in less than half a century from his death, his countrymen seem generally disposed to challenge his claim to their esteem. It is, however, but justice to add, that several of his contemporaries of his own party, regarded him with the warmest affection, and even the reserved and unimpassioned Romilly could not resist the influence of his kindly disposition.

A loss he was to his friends, without doubt, but no one could experience this in a greater degree than the Regent. The portion of the correspondence that follows, will prove how deeply it was felt in this quarter.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Saturday.

Dearest Brother,

Nothing is yet determined upon; the Prince and the

Ministers had been supposed to have determined to try Castlereagh in the House of Commons, and Liverpool in the Lords, but they have been said latterly to feel more hesitation and doubt about the success of this arrangement. They had a Cabinet on it last night, the result of which is not known. We expect that if they are frightened out of this, the Prince will send to Wellesley, and perhaps he may, or may not authorise him to communicate with Dropmore and Portman Square; but I don't think he will, and if he does, I think Lords Grenville and Grey must decline making a part of such a government.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, March[1] 14, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

Lord Grenville is at Dropmore, and at his house in town he is not expected. The little that I have heard is of a notion of Lord Bathurst as a temporary resource to give time, assisted by Vansittart; but Lord Auckland tells me, that he believes they are trying to have courage enough to launch Castlereagh as Minister, and that he is ready to undertake it; it turns out to be quite impossible for Canning to act with Castlereagh, and as the option must be made between these two for the leading Minister of the Commons, my informant thinks they will try Castlereagh, but does not think that this choice will succeed. From the same quarter, I hear of increased distress in our Portugal service, from the impossibility of finding specie of any sort, and in respect of provisions, the country is so much exhausted, that Lord

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[1] Mistake, should be May.

Wellington is said to have had great difficulty in his last march, owing to the total failure of all provisions.

Will not the American embargo necessarily increase very much this severe pressure?

Fremantle quotes Mundy of Nottinghamshire, for saying that in the town of Nottingham they made the most open rejoicings for the news of the murther of Perceval. Lords Stamford, Fitzwilliam and Derby are gone to their respective Lord-Lieutenantcies. There is a report afloat of Knowlesley (Lord Derby's house) being burnt by the mob, but it is not believed. There is great general terror, as I am told, in London. I have not seen the Spencers, but I shall dine there.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, May 13, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

I send you Grey's answer, which I have this morning received. I must, of course, comply with his request of remaining here for some little time longer. It seems, indeed, to me that it is on every account the best thing I can do.

I hear nothing from any other quarter, as to what is likely to be done, but the difficulties of uniting Wellesley and Canning with Castlereaghs and Doctors, seem so great, that I should not wonder if the idea is adopted of patching up the thing as it is. This will suit better than anything else with the Prince Regent's indecision and fear of taking any new step, and it will keep the power of M****** Square in full, or indeed, in increased strength.

EARL GREY TO LORD GRENVILLE.

House of Lords, 5 o'clock, Wednesday.

My dear Lord,

I received your letter this morning before I came out. I much regret the feeling you express with respect to Whitbread, though I cannot wonder at it. His speech, I understand, on Creevy's motion, which he certainly wished to prevent, was, I understand, very moderate; and he voted, not for the original motion, but for Brand's amendment to inquire into the precedents of any alteration made by Parliament in the fees of the office of the Exchequer. At the city meeting, with the exception of the praise of Burdett, to which at such a moment I must feel as strong objections as any one can, I am not aware that he did anything more than express strongly his opinion in favour of Parliamentary Reform. But I must feel that all this is very unsatisfactory, and there is no use at present in pursuing this discussion.

Upon the question you put to me about coming to town, I have no hesitation in saying that I see no reason for your doing so, under the present circumstances. My belief is, that no proposition will come to us, and I should be very unwilling that you should place yourself in the situation of appearing either to expect or desire it. Their difficulties, however, must be very great, and though I am sure nothing but extreme necessity can ever again induce the Prince Regent to turn to us, there is no saying in such a crisis what may happen. As you are so kind, therefore, as to leave the determination to me, I will, without scruple, say that I wish you could stay at Dropmore a few days longer. By this means, the appearance which I apprehend from your coming to town would be avoided, and you would be near enough for me to recur to you for advice, within the space of two or three hours, if it should be necessary. To act without it, even in the most trifling preliminary which might lead to the discussion of our taking office, I should feel to be quite impossible.

If you should assent to this request, I will engage not to detain you one minute after the possibility of our being applied to, shall have been removed, and you shall have early and constant accounts of all I hear. At present, I know nothing. The Ministers appear much agitated, and are much engaged in consultations amongst themselves. The Duke of York appears to me to be very busy; and I know that he will leave no stone unturned to keep us out. He little knows how heartily I wish him success. I do not believe any communication of any kind to have been made as yet to Wellesley; and I do not think his appearance, (I have this moment seen him here) is that of great satisfaction or hope. My conjecture is, that they will endeavour, however desperate the attempt may appear, to go on exactly as they are. Bathurst, perhaps, Premier, Bragge in Ryder's place, Vansittart or Long the Exchequer: Castlereagh in his present office, Minister of the House of Commons, and some means taken to bring Manners Sutton, or some other of the young men forward as an assistant in debate. This, as I have said, appears desperate, but I am by no means sure that it would not enable them to go on, at least to the present Session.

The Prince, I hear, was at first very angry after dinner, and a certain portion of Curaçoa, very violent against some of us, attributing this mischief, and every other, to our inflammatory speeches. He has since, I understand, spoken more liberally of you.

The manufacturers from Birmingham are petitioning the House of Commons to go on with the examination, and if they do so there, we shall do the same here to-morrow. I am afraid the amount of the grant to Perceval's family will occasion some clamour, and I must say, that I think we have been going a little too fast in the first impulse of our feelings on this subject.

Ever yours,

GREY.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, May 14, 1812.

You will have seen that the sum of £2,000 per annum, and £50,000 for children, was voted to the family of Mr. Perceval. After the business seemed quite closed, Sumner very foolishly proposed the former annuity to be carried on to the elder son after the death of the mother. This has given great dissatisfaction, and is to be discussed again on the report to-day: I did not go up with the address, and therefore know not what has passed. The accounts from Nottingham to-day are horrible. Upon receiving the news of Perceval's assassination, the mob assembled, and paraded the streets with drums and colours, exulting in the deed. The military dispersed them, and I do not understand there was any blood shed, but the disposition and tone they assumed is, indeed, to be dreaded. I have not yet heard what is come from Manchester and that neighbourhood. There certainly was a manifestation in favour of the murderer as he passed through Charing Cross on his way to Newgate. You may easily imagine what a sensation of alarm exists in all description of people in London, but I do not understand it has yet reached Carlton House. Nothing has yet been done from thence, and the general belief is, that an attempt will be made to patch up the present government. A great rumour prevails that Abbot will quit the chair, to take a responsible office. I cannot believe he will be such a fool, but it is very generally said. Ryder must go out; all people, even the best friends of those who belonged to Perceval, say he is quite incapable.

The Carlton House language has been violent against the Opposition, but excepting Lord Grenville, whom the Prince said had been in his conduct since the receipt of his letter addressed to Lord Grey, the only one who had behaved like a gentleman, and had not publicly insulted him.

The more I think of the state of the House of Commons, the more convinced I am that no patch can do—it may be attempted, but it cannot do. The great adviser at Carlton House is Lord Eldon, but I know Mr. Perceval's friends are exasperated to the last degree against Lord Wellesley. Lord Castlereagh has as yet taken upon himself, with much tone of authority, the lead of Minister in the House of Commons.

Stocks have risen near 2 per cent. since Mr. Perceval's death. Lord Clive told me last night he meant to propose a monument in St. Paul's. You will see by all this, how much they will overdo the thing, and how inevitably it must lead to violence. Lord Grenville waits at Dropmore a few days, leaving it to Lord Grey to let him know if he wishes him in town.

W. H. F.

Lady Hertford, who was to have had a grand rout on Friday, has put it off. Bellingham is to be tried to-morrow, by the Chief Baron, who is specially directed.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

4 o'clock.

I write merely a few words, to say that nothing has transpired from Carlton House. I have no doubt whatever that a patch will be made of the present government, and I rather suspect Lord Liverpool at the head; Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer; B. Bathurst, Home Secretary; how the rest of the arrangements will be, I cannot guess; I believe Abbot has declined all office.

Bellingham has been condemned, and is to be executed in Palace Yard on Monday. Nothing can be more unwise than this determination, which can lead to no good whatever; it will collect 100,000 people, without any government formed to act, without troops, and with the most fearful disposition in the people. There was a Cabinet last night, at ten at night; but nothing has transpired to-day—I have this moment left Ponsonby, who knew nothing.

It is believed that Bonaparte has left Paris.

You will see how wild and absurd the House of Commons is running, with regard to provision for Perceval's family.

I am this moment getting into my chaise, and shall have the pleasure of being at Stowe Sunday evening.

Ever yours, with respect and affection.

W. H. F.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, May 15, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

Hammond, whom I have just met, tells me that Bellingham is convicted, and to be hanged in Palace Yard. If so, our judges are as mad as Bellingham.

I am still told that all is unsettled. Stair assures me that he knows from good authority that Castlereagh doubts and hesitates, and will not undertake it, though it is pressed upon him. Others say he is ready, and the Parliament afraid, but all will agree that Castlereagh has declared he will resign if Canning comes in.

Lord Carysfort quotes Lord Grey for saying that the Prince, the day before yesterday, in speaking of Opposition, said, "*his own friends* had behaved to him like scoundrels; but that Lord Grenville he had no complaint against." Is he going to try to detach Lord Grenville? It will make a good postscript to his letter to my brother, to suppose that he will communicate it to Lord Grey.

Lord Bridgewater called upon me to inquire after you, with great kindness; but he added a wish that your sentiments should be known about the *County* addressing on the murder of Perceval. I said I saw no reason; but, upon his repeating it twice, I said I would just mention to you what he had wished to be stated to you—though I trust you will not think of it. It is evident that the Ministers are trying to lead on the cry of regret, in order to strengthen their own hands; and some people say they want to proclaim martial law. I thought this nonsense; but Lord Stafford tells me that Lord Uxbridge yesterday said to him, "If you will put the country in our *military* hands, *we* will save you yet, and not abuse the power you give us."

Considering his constant intercourse with the Commander, and with the Horse Guards, I think this not unimportant.

CHAPTER XI.

[1812.]

THE PRINCE REGENT'S SECRET NEGOCIATIONS WITH HIS MINISTERS—LORD ELDON'S INCONSISTENCY—LORD LIVERPOOL'S PROPOSALS TO MR. CANNING AND MARQUIS WELLESLEY, AND THEIR REPLIES—MR. STUART WORTLEY MOVES, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, AN ADDRESS TO THE PRINCE REGENT, PRAYING HIM TO FORM A STRONG GOVERNMENT—POLITICAL RUMOURS—LORD WELLESLEY'S NEGOCIATION WITH LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY—THEIR REPLY—LORD GRENVILLE, AND MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE'S ACCOUNT OF THESE TRANSACTIONS—CONDUCT OF THE PRINCE REGENT—CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY AND THE PRINCE.

CHAPTER XI.

Among the memoranda of Lord Eldon, to which his biographer had access, were found the following, in his handwriting:

"The Chancellor, understanding himself to be authorised by the Prince Regent, to learn the sentiments of the Cabinet, whether they would consider it to be their duty, if called upon by his Royal Highness, to carry on the administration of the Government, *under any member of the present Cabinet*, whom his Royal Highness might think proper to select as the head of it, requests that the Cabinet will be pleased to express their sentiments upon this point, that he may be enabled to lay them before his Royal Highness."

To which, of course, after due consideration, was returned the following answer:

"The Cabinet would feel it to be their duty, if called upon by the Prince Regent, to carry on the administration of the Government, under any member of the present Cabinet, whom his Royal Highness might think proper to select as the head of it. They consider it to be at the same time incumbent upon them most humbly to submit to his Royal Highness, that under all the present circumstances of the country, the result of their endeavours to carry on the Government, must, in their judgment, *be very doubtful.* It does not appear to them to be hopeless, *if the administration is known to possess the entire confidence of the Prince Regent.*"

The ministers were then individually canvassed for their opinions as to the advantage of doing without assistance from either section of the Opposition, by the circulation among them of the following queries—each returned his answer, which, in most instances, will be found singularly characteristic.

"Are you of opinion that G. and G. [Grey and Grenville] out, and W. and C. [Wellesley and Canning] out, you can carry on the Government?"

Mulgrave. No.

Sidmouth. Doubtful.

Camden. Very doubtful, not desperate.

Castlereagh. Doubtful, to say the least, without a proposition.

Bathurst. Dangerous to P[rince] and country.

Ryder. Extremely difficult.

Buckinghamshire. Doubtful.

Eldon. It might.

Westmoreland. Yes.

Melville. Very improbable.

Liverpool. Doubtful, not desperate.

I. Nobody, with Lord W. *at the head.*

II. If the P. puts *at the head* any member of the *present* administration, will the rest support him?"

"Yes."[1]

"If that member thinks of talking with W. and C. will you allow him to do so?"

Lord Eldon's biographer adds: "Those of the answers to this last question, which can be deciphered, are very various; some "ay" some "no;" one for "leaving it to the individual." Lord Castlereagh's answer is: "Decline being an obstacle, but reserve my own determination." He goes on to state that there was a general concurrence in one opinion, which, in the first question, was given by Lord Castlereagh, decidedly the most able man in the Cabinet, that their chance of public support would be much stronger, after they had made a proposition to Lords Grey and Grenville, and to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning. It should be now borne in mind that the Lord Chancellor, an influential member of the Government, had positively stated on February 15, in a letter to Mr. Perceval, that "it was not consistent with his honour to take part in a negociation for a junction with which he would have nothing to do."[2]

Lord Liverpool made his first proposal to Mr. Canning on the 17th of May, the details of which have been recorded in a minute; for, in all these transactions, the parties treated with, insisted that everything which passed verbally should be put into black and white. This was taken down by them, and corrected, and authenticated by the opposite negociator. Lord Liverpool appears to have stated that his colleagues were willing to act with Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, " under an arrangement," the latter writes, " which might be at once consistent with their own honour and duty, and honourable and satisfactory to us." The minute then proceeds to state, that it was to be understood that Lord Castlereagh was to preserve the position in the Government and in the House of Commons he at present held; that his colleagues were desirous that Lord Liverpool should be at the head of the Administration, which desire was known to the Prince Regent; and that no change was anticipated in the policy of the Government towards the Roman Catholics.

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[1] Twiss's "Life of Lord Eldon." Third Edition, Vol. I. p. 493.

[2] "Life of Lord Eldon," Vol. I. p. 478.

Lord Liverpool next proceeded to the Marquis Wellesley; and it appears by the minute of what took place, that, in addition to the points just mentioned, much was said respecting the scale of the efforts which had hitherto been made in the Peninsula, without, however, eliciting any pledge from the Government, beyond an expression of their desire to do everything that was possible; that certain members of the Administration had been long desirous of retiring, and would therefore be ready to afford facilities for any new arrangement; but that Lord Sidmouth and his friends were to remain; that Lords Grenville and Grey, with their friends, were to be excluded.

Lord Wellesley insisted that he and Mr. Canning were independent of each other, though he would not accept office, unless a fair proposal was made to his friend. An interchange of notes then took place between Mr. Canning and Lord Liverpool on the 17th; and a reply to the proposition was sent by Lord Wellesley to Lord Liverpool on the following day, which entered at length upon the differences of opinion that existed between himself and the Administrations of Mr. Perceval and Lord Liverpool, and stated a belief that the formation of a Government on a more liberal and extended basis was still practicable. Mr. Canning's reply to Lord Liverpool was of the same date, and much of the same complexion, though laying stress only on his opinions respecting the Roman Catholics as the obstacle to his joining the Administration. On the 19th, a long explanatory letter was sent from Lord Liverpool to the Marquis of Wellesley, which elicited a still longer explanatory reply.[1]

The Prince seemed disposed to continue his Perceval Government on Perceval principles, when the voice of public opinion began to cry out somewhat loudly for better things; and on the 21st of May,[2] the Hon.

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[1] "I hear," writes Mr. Wilberforce, on the 16th of May, "that the ministers left are trying to get Wellesley to act without being at the head, and Vansittart as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, of course, Canning as one of the Secretaries of State."—"Life," by his Sons, Vol. IV., p. 29.

[2] "May 20—Nicholas Vansittart, made Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Liverpool to be First Lord of the Treasury. Wellesley and Canning refused their co-operation, it is said, on the ground of not giving up their opinion on the Catholic Question. I own I do not

Stuart Wortley (Lord Wharncliffe) moved in the House of Commons, in pursuance of a notice he had given the previous day, for an Address to the Prince Regent, praying him to form a strong and efficient Administration; and it was carried against Ministers by a majority of four. This address to the Prince Regent was presented at the *levée* on May 22nd, by Mr. Stuart Wortley and Lord Milton. It was received, according to the official statement, most graciously, with the following reply: "I will take into my most serious and immediate consideration the Address which I have received from the House of Commons." Afterwards the Ministers were admitted to an interview, when, after acknowledging that they had failed in their efforts to strengthen the Government, according to the wishes of his Royal Highness, they all tendered their resignations. The result was, that Lord Wellesley was sent for by the Prince.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Friday.

DEAREST BROTHER,

Stuart Wortley and Lord Milton go to the Prince, to carry him the resolutions, after the levee, by his own appointment. Meantime, it is universally reported, and I believe truly, that the Ministers have actually resigned; and it is said that their only excuse for having awaited this storm, is that they were deceived by Charles Long, who assured them of a safe and complete majority in the House of Commons.

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see how the Ministry can stand the battering of the House of Commons." —"Life of Wilberforce," Vol, IV. p. 30.

I presume the result of this will be the Prince sending to Lord Wellesley, to authorize him to consider of the forming of a government, perhaps with the condition of a concurrence in the opinions expressed in Lord Wellesley's letter, of more extended military operations in the Peninsula. If Lord Wellesley sees Lord Grey and Lord Grenville upon any such proposition, he will explain to them what those facilities are for more extended operations to which his letter alludes, and which it may, perhaps, be easier to have to look for than to find.

It is reported that the Prince, in conversation with Wellesley, said he knew Wellesley must be shocked at the grossness of *female connections* being adverted to in *political controversies*; and that Wellesley answered, that he had female connections enough, and did not care who knew of them, but that he took ample care that no woman whatever should ever have anything to say to him upon the subject of politics.

I have just received a letter from William, to say that, pressed as he is by Lord Grey, he will come up to town to-morrow, at eleven.

Only a few days passed, before the resigned ministry were reported to have re-occupied their positions—evidently, however, a temporary arrangement, for nothing appears to have been decided. The Prince was making up his mind to commence a new negociation with the Opposition, to which the strong sentiments recently expressed by some of the leaders, made him extremely averse; and this unfavourable impression was taken full advantage of by the friends of their opponents. As will be seen—his feeling against Lord Grenville might easily have been surmounted.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Tuesday.

DEAREST BROTHER,

I left Lord Grenville writing to you, and he will tell you better than I can all that he hears of the old ministers being launched again. Their Cabinet of last night adjourned to this morning at twelve, and ended to-day between two and three, since which, Lord Chancellor and Lord Liverpool have been at Carlton House; and the universal belief is that the Prince has persuaded the old ministers to go on—whether with or without Canning and Wellesley, perhaps will not be known till to-morrow.

Lady Besborough is just returned from a visit to Lady Bathurst; Lady Bathurst told her that she had been packing up, to go into the country to-morrow; but that she was *sorry* to say her journey was stopped, by the *thing* being *afloat again*; and she added that, to be sure nothing could be so foolish as the paper of refusal which the Cabinet sent first to Lord Wellesley; and that it was entirely owing to an angry and intemperate movement of Lord Liverpool's, which they all now disapproved of, &c. &c. This looks very like their expecting to include Wellesley in their new arrangements; and if they can prevail upon him and Canning, after all that is passed, the thing may go on for the Session; though without Canning I scarce think it can be made practicable.

I hear again, from good authority, that two days ago the Prince said he could easily *forgive* Lord Grenville, but that he had rather abdicate the Regency than see Lord Grey or Tierney in his service.

Canning dined at Dent's yesterday, and two or three of our ranks dined there, who say that it was a most melancholy dinner, and that Canning was quite silent and dejected.

P.S. I this moment am told that the street news is that the Prince had given his *congé* to Lord Wellesley; but nothing is said of Canning.

In Staffordshire, Sir J. Wrottesley has announced himself a *reformer*, in order to avoid the opposition of Mr. Wolseley and the Burdettites; and thereby he incurs an opposition from the country gentlemen, who set up against him the nephew and heir of Sir E. Littleton.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Thursday.

Dearest Brother,

The evening papers will bring you the letters and minutes of conversation between Canning, Wellesley, and Liverpool. Our friends all expect Temple, and George, and Fremantle, and Bernard, for to-night's division; and Macdonald, the great list-maker, says we shall have a majority; so we shall, if what I hear is true, that H. Drummond, Lascelles, Wilberforce, Lord Lovain, Lord Dysart, and all the Lowthers, will support Stuart Wortley; though some say the Lowthers only declare they will not vote against Stuart. The inexplicable thing is, how Liverpool undertakes this, after having had notice from the above list, that they should be hostile to this arrangement. If they are beat, the Prince will send to Wellesley, who must have some discussion with Opposition, because he is pledged to it; but with his new pledge of enlarged Spanish war, and with his and Canning's defence of Orders of Council, though they are hostile to Licences; and with his and Canning's *intermediary* views of Ireland, I do not see much ground of very prolonged discussion with our particular wing of the army. I think, therefore, it will end, after some discussion, in Canning and Wellesley patching up a government of their own.

I find Lord Grey has earnestly written for Lord Grenville to town; I almost hope he will not come till he must; but probably he will obey Grey's summons, and come this evening.

Wellesley says the Prince strongly warned him against embarking at all with Opposition, and said he would have nothing to say to him if he did. Wellesley says he answered he was sorry for it, for he thought the *Prince's honour,* and the country's *interest,* required it, and rose to take his leave; he says, the Prince stopped him, and began talking of something else.

The new negociations commenced on the 23rd, with a communication from Mr. Canning to Lord Liverpool, stating certain principles on which a new Administration was proposed to be formed by Lord Wellesley—the taking into early consideration the state of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, and the prosecution of the War in the Peninsula with the best means at the disposal of the country; but, in their replies of the same date, Lords Liverpool and Melville declined joining Lord Wellesley. This rebuff necessitated the new negociator to turn his eyes in another direction; and a third negociation commenced with the following.

Minute of a communication made by Lord Wellesley to Lords Grey and Grenville, at Lord Grey's house.

May 23, 1812.

Lord Wellesley stated that he had received the commands of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent to lay before his Royal Highness the plan of such an administration as he (Lord Wellesley) might deem adapted to the present crisis of affairs.

That he had apprised his Royal Highness of the necessity of ascertaining the views and dispositions of all parties, with regard to certain general principles, previously to the formation of any such plan.

That he considered himself merely as the instrument of executing his Royal Highness's commands on this occasion, and that he neither claimed nor desired for himself any station in the Administration, which it was in his Royal Highness's contemplation to form.

Under these circumstances, he requested to know, whether any obstacle existed to the concurrence of Lords Grey and Grenville, or their friends in the following general principles, as the basis upon which an Administration might be formed. First: that the state of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, and the claims of that body of his Majesty's subjects should be taken into immediate consideration, with a view to a conciliatory adjustment of those claims.

2ndly. That the war in the Peninsula should be prosecuted on a scale of adequate vigour.

Lord Wellesley stated that as Mr. Canning and he agreed in these general principles, he had requested Mr. Canning to communicate them to Lord Liverpool.

Lord Wellesley has reduced the substance of this communication to writing, and now submits it to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville.

WELLESLEY.

Lords Grey and Grenville returned the following :

Memorandum, May 24, 1812.

In such a moment as the present, we feel it to be the duty of all public men, both by frank and conciliatory explanations of principle, and by the total abandonment of every personal object, to facilitate, as far as may be in their power, the means of giving effect to the late vote of the House of Commons, and of averting the imminent and unparalleled dangers of the country.

Lord Wellesley has selected two, among the many important subjects which must engage the attention of any men who could, in such circumstances, be called upon to consider of the acceptance of stations of public trust. On those two points, our explanation shall be as distinct as it is in our power to make it.

On the first, indeed, our opinion is too well known, and has been too recently expressed, to need repetition. We have derived a very high gratification from Lord Wellesley's powerful exertions in support of the claims of the Roman Catholics; as well as from the manner in which that subject is adverted to in his minute. And we do not hesitate to assure him that we will warmly support any proposal made by any Ministers, for the immediate consideration of those claims, with a view to their conciliatory adjustment. A measure without which we have already declared that we can entertain no hope, in any case of rendering our services useful.

As to the second point, no person feels more strongly than we do, the advantages which would result from a successful termination of the present contest in Spain. But we are of opinion that the direction of the military operations in an extensive war, and the more or less vigorous prosecution of those operations, are questions not of principle but of policy, to be regulated by circumstances in their nature temporary and fluctuating, and, in many cases, known only to persons in official stations, by the engagements of the country, the prospects of ultimate success, the extent of the exertions necessary for its attainment, and the means of supporting those efforts, without too great a pressure on the finances and internal prosperity of the country. On such questions, therefore, no public man, whether in or out of office, can undertake for more than a deliberate and dispassionate consideration, according to the circumstances of the case, as it may appear, and to such means of information as may be within their reach. But we cannot in reality conceal from Lord Wellesley that, in the present state of the finances, we entertain the strongest doubts of the practicability of an increase in any branch of the public expenditure.

The contemporary correspondence elucidates the proceedings of all parties so clearly, that very little explanation is necessary.

Lord Moira also wrote to Lord Wellesley on the 23rd, acknowledging the receipt of the minute, and implying that the conditions of agreement met with his approval. "A plan of Government, therefore, on the basis proposed by your Lordship would have my most cordial wishes."[1] Lords Holland and Lansdowne, to whom

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[1] Pearce's "Life and Correspondence of Marquis Wellesley," Vol. III., p. 245.

Lord Wellesley had also applied, wrote on the same day, referring him to Lords Grey and Grenville, in whose sentiments they professed to have cordially coincided.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, May 24, 1812.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

The memorandum which George will forward to you, contains all I could say. I have no doubt that the Prince is as adverse to Wellesley as to us, and means only to make a case against us, which may enable him to go to the House of Commons and say, "You see I cannot make persons *unite,* who refuse to do so. I must take one or other of the parties, and of the two I prefer the present to their opponents."

Whether the House of Commons will be of the same opinion I know not, but I should say probably yes.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Pall Mall, May 24, 1812. Sunday, half-past 1. P.M.

DEAREST BROTHER,

When Lord Wellesley sent the note of conversation which he was to put in writing, it was found that the note was of a much less forbidding character than the conversation had been. The want of authority from the Prince was entirely sunk in the paper, and any body who reads the paper, would rather collect from it that Wellesley was the authorised agent of the Prince in the whole communication. The *moderated* concession to Ireland was changed into *immediate consideration of the Catholic Claims, with a view to their final adjustment,* and the Spanish warlike operations in the Peninsula, instead of being *to be increased,* were only to be *adequate,* without saying whether adequate to success, or to the means of the country.

To this written note, standing in this shape, an answer from Lords Grey and Grenville was written as conciliatory as might be, professing an unfeigned desire to give every facility to the vote of the House of Commons, in the present perilous state of the country, and, therefore, frankly answering the two points selected by Lord Wellesley for his inquiry.

In answer to the first, *Ireland,* professing entire concurrence, and referring to our past opinions and conduct on it, and repeating that without this measure, there could be no question of our friends embarking in the public service.

On the second, *Spain,* observing that it was a question not of principle but of policy, and, therefore, must be decided by information, by the engagements of the country, by the prospect of success, and by the means which could be spared by the country to accomplish that success, without too much affecting the finances and prosperity of the country; but that it was necessary to add that the present state of their opinions did not incline them to think that it would be found practicable to increase the present scale of expense.

I have not copies of these papers, or I would have sent them; but this is the substance.

Lords Grey and Grenville went with this answer to-day at twelve, to Lord Wellesley, and in delivering it to him, added verbally that they thought it necessary to remark that this paper was only a communication to Lord Wellesley, as it did not appear that there was any authority from the Prince to communicate with them, and, therefore, that they did not consider themselves as entered into a negotiation for making an Administration. Lord Wellesley took the paper, and said he should not fail to apprise the Prince of the substance of it.

He added, that Canning had brought from the present Cabinet a refusal to enter into any discussion for the formation of a Cabinet with Wellesley; and I hear that the Duke of York, and all the Court people, are outrageous in their abuse of Wellesley, for his conduct in the last negociation, and for the publicity he gave to the letters and conversations.

So it now stands. It appears that Moira has been applied to by Wellesley, and has declined taking any share in Administration. Wellesley has also been with Sheridan.

It seems probable that the Prince's intention is to collect as many difficulties as he can from all public men, and to plead those difficulties as necessarily leading him to some patch up with the old Government; but then the old Government having disclaimed Wellesley, he and Canning must be out of it, and then they being with us, how can any other stand?

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 24., 6 P.M.

I have waited to the last moment, to tell you that I have heard nothing more than you will receive from D.

Wellesley has not sent either to Grey or me; and I suppose the Prince has not decided what to do. I am convinced he means to set up the old system again, but whether he or they are stout enough, and Parliament patient enough, is more than I can say.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 25, 1812. 5 P.M.

DEAREST BROTHER,

I take a pen merely to say, that there is nothing to tell you. We understand that the Prince saw Lord Wellesley yesterday, at seven, and received from him the two papers of which I wrote to you. I do not find that he is known to have made any comments upon them, but that he told Lord Wellesley he should hear from him.

In this state, it is uncertain whether we shall hear anything to-day. The Ministers continue to abuse Wellesley, and to talk of themselves as out of the question. Tierney tells me that Stuart Wortley is not satisfied with what he hears of the transaction, and that he (Wortley) or somebody will probably ask some question in the House this evening. Cooke told Tierney, this morning, that Wellesley and the Opposition must come in; he spoke of Wellesley with great contempt, and of Canning as a tumbler; but said, if we had sense enough to make no great change of system, and no violent attack on the *last* government, this Session, we might go on well, and substantiate our strength in government. I quote this only to show you how entirely their language is desperate as to present office.

The Prince is said to be, in all appearance, very cheerful; and there are many who believe that he is still not aware of the difficulties under which he stands with regard to the formation of a government.

I have sent to-day, to engage for you and me, either Lord Warwick's, or the house Sir S. Hood was in, which is next to Lord Warwick's; I have engaged it from the first of July.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

House of Commons, half-past 5 o'clock.

You will hear from Mr. Grenville, probably, that at last the bitter pill has been swallowed, and the Prince Regent has authorized Lord Wellesley, this morning, to form a government, and given him full powers. Canning has just announced this to the House; and Stuart Wortley afterwards put two questions to Ponsonby, the purport of which was to know whether, since the passing the former resolution, the Opposition had refused to accede to any proposition to form a government, either upon public or private grounds. His answer was, that neither he, nor his friends in the other House, had refused to form part of a government, either upon public or private grounds. The Treasury bench wished to get rid of these questions before the answer was given, but it was overruled.

I cannot describe to you the contempt and indignation felt universally at the conduct of the Regent; and he has at last been driven to that which he would have done with so much more advantage to himself, a fortnight ago. It is understood that Lord Wellesley was to go to Lord Grenville, who is gone to Dropmore till to-morrow. He will probably, however, now return this evening.

I have been in the city all the morning; so I only give you what has passed in the House.

Yours,

W. H. F.

GENERAL GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Hill Street, May 25, 1812.

My dear Lord,

Everything remains in the same state of suspension, and I believe the Regent's embarrassment is beyond all description. I saw the Duke of York this morning, who seemed to be in tolerable good spirits, but by no means communicative; and I was, of course, not inquisitive.

Adieu, my dear Lord,

Believe me to be ever, with the truest affection,

Yours most sincerely,

R. GRENVILLE.

The conversation reported in the next communication to have passed between the Prince Regent and the Marquis Wellesley appears extraordinary, but ought not to be considered less authentic on that account. His Royal Highness's communications to the different distinguished persons who were honoured with his confidence at this eventful period, if placed side by side, would assume much the same character.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

4 o'clock, P.M., May 26, 1812.

About four yesterday, Lord Wellesley saw the Prince Regent, by the command of the latter. The Prince had an air of great gaiety and pleasantry, and affected great kindness towards Lord Wellesley. He began the conversation as follows:

"Well, Wellesley, I find you have totally failed with the Ministry," to which Lord Wellesley assented; "and also," continued the Prince, "with Opposition."

"There, Sir," said Lord Wellesley, "I must beg to stop you. I could not fail where I had no authority to treat."

The Prince then continued thus in substance. That he had read over, and well considered Lord Wellesley's project, communicated to him the evening before. That on one principle of it, namely, the immediately entering upon the consideration of the Catholic Claims, he went the utmost length that Lord Wellesley had gone, or would wish to go, and that he would name no Administration, nor put his confidence in any which should not adopt that line of conduct. To which Lord Wellesley replied, that if that were his Royal Highness's determination, and that if it were fairly and honourably conducted, without trick or juggle towards the Catholics, that he, for one, would support any Administration formed on such a principle, so far as that point went; but he would not pledge himself either to take office with it, or give it his general support.

The Prince then said, that as to making a proposition for a junction with Opposition, nothing should ever induce him to employ them. That he had no objection to one or two of them individually, but as a body, he would rather abdicate the Regency, than ever come into contact with them. "But," added he, "there will be no occasion for any such overture, for you will be happy to hear, my dear Wellesley, that the Chancellor is entirely come round to you upon the Catholic Question; and, indeed, assures me that he was with you from the first."

I need not tell your Lordship the astonishment, and (I believe) dismay, with which Lord Wellesley received this extraordinary piece of intelligence.

"And," continued the Prince, "Melville, who was never violent against it, is also with you, and I have prevailed upon him to waive his personal repugnance to acting with you. I have seen the Chancellor and Liverpool this morning, and have rowed them handsomely for their letter to you, which was a most unprovoked and unpardonable folly. And I have desired Liverpool to summon a Cabinet this night, when the whole subject will be considered over again. And then you know you can all meet together to-morrow, or next day, and choose your offices amongst one another!"

This was all of material that passed in this extraordinary interview. It is useless to state the outrageous vehemence with which the Prince abused the Opposition, and shall only mention that Lord Wellesley said at parting,

"I once more press it upon your Royal Highness, that you can make no Administration, that will not compromise your own honour, and endanger the state, which shall be formed upon the principle of personal exclusion; nor will I, for one, be a party to such, either in its formation or existence."

As late as three this day, Lord Wellesley had heard nothing more, and, in fact, thinks the thing will go off, and that this infatuated man, will risk himself and the country upon the present men.

I am confident that if Opposition only preserve themselves compact, they must lead, and that shortly, and in that case, I *know* Lord Wellesley would go to Ireland with happiness and gratitude.

I have seen Lord Grenville this day, who, I found, has not the accurate information I thought he had, and which he surely ought in this crisis.

CHAPTER XII.

[1812.]

EMBARRASSING POSITION OF THE PRINCE REGENT ENDEAVOURING TO FORM A GOVERNMENT—EARL MOIRA'S INTERVIEW WITH THE PRINCE—CORRESPONDENCE OF MARQUIS WELLESLEY WITH EARL GREY—POLITICAL RUMOURS—ILL-FEELING OF THE PRINCE REGENT TOWARDS EARL GREY—THE "PESTILENT INFLUENCE"—ANOTHER NEGOCIATION BETWEEN MARQUIS WELLESLEY AND LORD GREY—JOINT ANSWER OF LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY—MORE COMMUNICATIONS—PLAN FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT.

CHAPTER XII.

At this period, the Prince Regent was in a condition of mind not at all to be envied. The problem how to form a government out of what were popularly considered the best materials, when it was impossible to make them combine, his Royal Highness vainly endeavoured to solve. There were some of his present Ministers, whose administrative qualities or devotion to his person, strongly recommended them to his favour. There were two of his late Ministers, whose possession of very high qualifications for office was indubitable; and there were certain of his old friends among the Opposition, whose recommendations were equally powerful. But insurmountable difficulties lay in the way of a junction of even two out of these three sets of candidates for office. Each had either questions or associates to bring forward, to which the others could not be reconciled; and the Prince continued, as it were, in a circle, trying to preserve a paramount influence in his councils for his own opinions and interests, while inviting the services of statesmen whose known liberality of sentiment should have brought to the government a fair share of popular support. The state of the case is fully described in the ensuing portion of the correspondence.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, May 26, half-past 6, P.M.

I have just received from Grey, the note of which the enclosed is a copy. Keep it to yourself, till you hear of it elsewhere. I have just time to save the post.

"I have just received intelligence from a quarter that can admit of no doubt, that the Prince is in such a state of irritation that he cannot be spoken to, and that Liverpool in the greatest consternation, has sent an express for the Duke of York at Oatlands."

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 27, 1812.

Lord Moira saw the Prince at five yesterday, the latter having consented so to do, at the express instance of Lord Wellesley. It was a reconciliation scene, *but no more.* Not a word was spoken with relation to a new Government.

Canning was with Lord Wellesley last night, and Sheridan; the former quite firm, and determined not to join Liverpool and Co. They both requested Lord Wellesley not to go out of town (else he was going) till this business was over one way or the other.

Wellesley Pole has reconciled himself to Lord Wellesley, and has formally acquiesced in the latter's view of Catholic Claims. Lord Wellesley has heard nothing further.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, May 27, 1812.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I have both these last days delayed writing to you till the last moment, in the expectation of having something to say to you; what I have now to say, is only that there is nothing. The alarm about the Prince was certainly exaggerated. Moira saw him in the evening, and describes him as very nervous and agitated; but says distinctly that this is all.

I have just seen Wellesley, who desired us to call upon him, that he might show us two papers; one, a minute from Canning to Lord Melville, in which Canning refers to some statement that Melville appears to have made to him, that the Cabinet was then considering how far they could adopt the first principle—that about the Catholics. Before he can make any observation on this statement (what it was we are not told farther than as above), he says he must know whether the Government is still subsisting, and whether Wellesley's commission is at an end. Melville answers that the Ministers are in office only till their successors are appointed; and that the Prince Regent considers Wellesley's commission *as at an end.*

This is a comical way of notifying to him the termination of such a commission. But such as it was, Wellesley felt himself bound to take it as final, and to apprize us of it.

I found, from his conversation, that he considers the attempt as having completely failed with Canning. The answer from the Cabinet to the Prince, as to their reconsideration of the two principles, is gone in, he says; but what it is, he knows not.

Moira's seeing the Prince, was in consequence of Wellesley having strongly urged it with the Prince. It was a *scène larmoyante*; but Moira says that nothing in the least distinct passed about politics or arrangements. Moira has been with him all this morning, and in the result will, I have no doubt, have some communication to make to us. There never was such a state of things.

Moira is just announced; and I must close this letter for the post before I see him. I will try to write by some other conveyance, if there be anything material.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 27, half-past 5.

Moira has been with him four hours, but has brought nothing to any point, except that now we are to be told that Wellesley's commission is not at an end, but is only suspended. This means, that Moira is to see him again to-morrow morning, and then is to make him, if he can, give an authority to Wellesley to form an administration; which how he is to do, I do not venture to guess.

Adieu.

Lord Wellesley wrote a note to Lord Grey on the 27th, enclosing the communication alluded to by Lord Grenville from Mr. Canning to Lord Melville, and from Lord Melville to Mr. Canning, of the 26th and 27th; the former desiring to know whether the Ministers considered Lord Wellesley's mission at an end, or were discussing the possibility of any of them joining the Administration he had proposed to form—the latter to reply that the Prince Regent considered Lord Wellesley's mission at an end, and that the persons now holding office held them only till their successors were appointed. Lord

Grey replied to the Marquis of Wellesley on the 27th, pointing out a difference in the statements of Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning. Lord Wellesley sent a rejoinder on the following day, enclosing a joint explanatory declaration, to which Lord Grey replied on the 29th, requiring a more distinct pledge respecting the Roman Catholics; and this elicited, from Lord Wellesley on the same day, "a firm expectation" that, if the advice he had given the Prince Regent should be ultimately approved, a very happy prospect would open to the country.[1]

At this period, Lord Sidmouth was not inactive. If the information Wilberforce received was correct, he had contrived to make his peace at Carlton House. On the 28th, he writes: "Nothing settled about the Ministry. Certainly, the Prince has seen all kinds of people, and is very nervous and distressed. Sheridan told me this afternoon that the several parties were farther from agreeing than ever. Others said that Lord Sidmouth was then with the Prince."[2] In a letter to Mr. Bankes, of the same date, he writes: "At this moment, I hear from Mr. Howard that Lord Sidmouth is with the Prince Regent."

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 28, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

Lord Grey undertook to write to you yesterday, and to tell you that Canning having asked Lord Melville whether Lord Wellesley's negociation with the Prince was considered at an end, Lord Melville gave him a formal answer in writing, declaring that it was at an end. Lord Wellesley considered this communication as official, and although he was not particularly flattered by hearing this from one of the old Ministers, instead of the Prince, still the answer seemed quite conclusive, and he communicated it as such to Lord Grey and to Lord Grenville. He took occasion in conversation to add, his entire conviction that Canning's conduct in his discussions, had been fair, honourable, and manly; and although he did not describe himself authorised to make any declaration for Canning, he was fully persuaded that Canning had now no further discussion or negotiation with them.

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[1] Pearce's "Life and Correspondence of Marquis Wellesley." Vol. III., p. 249 to 259.

[2] "Life," by his Sons, Vol. IV., p. 32.

Lord Moira, as you have heard, was sent for the day before yesterday, by the Prince, who hung round his neck in tears, and said that was the only way to meet him, with a fixed determination that everything which had tended to separate them should be mutually forgotten.

Lord Moira saw the Prince again yesterday, and in the evening saw Lord Grenville, and told him, that he (Lord Moira) was to see the Prince at eleven this morning, and expected then to prevail with him to give authority to Wellesley to resume his negociation with Lords Grenville and Grey.

Moira passed an hour with the Prince, and at twelve, all the Ministers went to Carlton House, and saw the Prince for two hours; but though it is now five, nothing has yet tranpired, and Holland told me this moment, that he had just passed Wellesley in the street, who told him he had as yet heard nothing. Meantime, a rumour prevails in the street, that Sidmouth is to undertake, and some Treasury notes have been sent out, which is rather a strong measure for an extinct Government. I fancy they mean to adjourn till

Monday, and I hear Stuart Wortley means to day to give notice of a motion for Monday, if a Government shall not be made by that time.

I should imagine nothing yet is decided, and the Prince, by all accounts, continues in the same state of helplessness and irresolution, in which he has passed the last week. I am assured from good authority that the Prince pressed Lord Moira very strongly to see and to converse with Lord Eldon, but that he had positively refused to do so. The Prince affects to be surprised that he can neither convince Lord Wellesley nor Lord Moira; the answer from the Lords Grey and Grenville was a refusal.

Lord Grenville is gone airing to Hampstead, so I have not seen him.

There appear to have been grave objections to Lord Wellesley; and his intended colleague, though much admired, was equally distrusted. "I hear even worldly people," writes Wilberforce, "take offence at ——'s loose character for the head of the Administration of the country."[1] In another place, the Diarist exclaims: "How striking is Canning's example! Had he fairly joined Perceval on the Duke of Portland's death, as Perceval offered, he would now have been the acknowledged head, and supported as such. But his ambitious policy threw him out; and he sunk infinitely in public estimation, and has since with difficulty kept buoyant."[2]

As if anticipating their failure, the Prince looked about him for another agent.

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[1] "Life of Wilberforce," Vol iv., p. 32.

Ibid. p. 34.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 28, 1812.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

Nothing of any sort has come to my knowledge to-day. Lord Moira has, I believe, been with the Prince Regent this morning; and at two o'clock in the morning, Lord Bucks was waked by a summons sent to him and the other Ministers to go together to Carlton House, at twelve. Whether this was to hear a valedictory oration, or to try any new contrivance, I know not.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

DEAREST BROTHER,

Everything remains in *statu quo,* nor has any new authority been given to Wellesley; the general opinion is, that the Prince has no resource, but that he has not yet overcome his disgust towards the nauseous draught which is held to his lips.

Wortley will move on Monday, so that I take for granted, something new will be heard before that time. There has been a communication between Grey and Wellesley, on the variations between Wellesley's paper and Canning's, in regard to the two points; they profess to agree entirely on the two points, and, therefore, there is nothing to prevent discussion with them, whenever the Prince may bring himself to propose it.

I hear that the Oxford Chancellor was very graciously received with the address at the Levee; and the Levee news was that Sir V. Gibbs has accepted of the vacant *puisne* judgeship, as I suppose, upon the old principle of half a loaf being better than no bread.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 29, 1812.

Here we are, just as we were. Moira, I believe, was to see the Prince this morning; but I know nothing of what passed. I went up with my address, and he was very civil to me—much as he ought to be—quite civil enough. The money in the Treasury cannot be made to hold out beyond this day se'nnight. To-morrow, Wortley will, I believe, give notice for a second motion for Monday.

Gibbs took his seat to-day, as a Puisne Judge, in the room of Lawrence, and the old people declare themselves quite out.

Never was such a state of things seen. The violence and the contempt expressed of the Prince Regent are beyond all imagination, and are truly shocking to hear of.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 30, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

While Moira was endeavouring to persuade the Prince to give Wellesley authority to propose to the two Lords G. to form a government, Lord Grenville took the advantage of this fine day, for an excursion with his wife to Hampton Court; so that I have not seen him to-day; but his temporary absence has produced no inconvenience, for I have good grounds to know that neither Lord Moira nor Lord Wellesley has as yet succeeded with the Prince, though both of them together have passed four hours at Carlton House this morning with the Prince. They left him an hour ago, and without having succeeded; so that, unless the Prince alters his mind to-morrow, he will be found without a government on Monday; and then Wortley and others will probably be very vehement in their language in the House of Commons.

It is difficult to conceive what possible resource, in the present moment, the Prince can fancy that he may resort to: at the same time, even if the negociation with our friends should be opened, there must probably arise very shortly, some points in which the Prince would take too *near* an interest, to induce himself to consent to all that must, perhaps, be demanded.

In the middle of all these difficulties, too, I am told that the Exchequer will run dry on the third (Wednesday next), but of this you are likely to know more than I do.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, June 1, 1812.

DEAREST BROTHER,

Lord Grenville went at ten o'clock this morning to pass this day at Dropmore, and return to-morrow. Lord Wellesley is just gone to Lord Grey; and the general impression and belief is, that he has obtained authority for discussing with the two Lords the formation of an administration.

This will not prevent Stuart Wortley from asking a question in the House of Commons to-day, in order to give an opportunity to Ponsonby of distinctly stating, that as yet no word of communication or message had passed from the Prince to either of the Lords G. This explanation has become the more necessary, from the pains that have been taken to circulate notions of the intolerable haughty demands of the two Lords; and in the 'Herald' of to-day, which is supposed to be the Carlton House paper, they have the impudence to assert that the delay in the business was occasioned by the unreasonable demands of the two Lords, *as to their share in the formation of the Cabinet.*

I called just now in Portman Square, in order to tell you of the result of the visit; but it was still going on; and therefore I could not learn anything.

I take for granted that what has produced this concession has been the fear of the expected discussion in the House. I am heartily glad I am not a member of that honourable house; for I find the members of it are all perfectly well satisfied, *and at this moment and under these circumstances, of a declared want of confidence, and an address to make a new government,* they are going, I say, to-day, to ratify Wellesley Pole's loan in Ireland for two millions, and are content to hear that the Bank of England has lent this *no government* two millions in England! I have, therefore, my constitutional and parliamentary principles to learn afresh.

Sheridan is said to be everywhere canvassing, these last three days, for supporting the Prince in his own nomination of his own Household; so that I think it still possible the new overture will quickly close, under this difficulty.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

June 1, 1812.

Yesterday evening, exactly at five, Lord Wellesley was going out of town to remain, when Lord Moira came to Apsley House, and made him the following communication. Lord Moira in the hope that the Duke of York's mediation might be useful, prevailed upon his Royal Highness to call on the Prince Regent, on the subject of the twenty-seven years animosity to Lord Grey. The Duke of York seemed to undertake this task very willingly, and saw the Prince conjointly with Lord Moira. The Prince was still very violent, and much ill blood between the brothers was the issue of this conference; nor has it yet subsided. The Prince, however, said at last to Lord Moira, that before he would consent to the admission of Lord Grey to his counsels, he must have a satisfactory explanation of a phrase his Lordship made use of in his seat; viz., "of a certain pestilent secret influence, which must be got rid of."

Whether Lord Grey's explanation will be satisfactory, or whether there will be any at all, I am ignorant of; but he has been applied to, and this day will determine.

The "pestilent secret influence" in the last note has either been named or insinuated in several of the preceding communications, and was the subject of severe animadversion in political circles. The press was frequent in denunciations of a *camarilla;* and it was the notorious power exercised from this source, that made the Opposition a few days later insist so strongly on a reconstruction of the Royal Household. The Prince, however, as will presently be shown, could not be prevailed on to alter this alleged domination; and its prolonged existence was so firmly relied on by the Ministers, who were supported by it, that they appear to have given themselves very little concern respecting the issue of negociations, the ostensible object of which was to send them about their business.

Strong observations had been made on the subject in Parliament, particularly in a debate in the House of Lords, on March 19th, when Lord Darnley stated that "the continuance of Ministers in office depended upon a breath—upon advisers not avowed. They rested upon persons not officially known in the House—upon persons who, for their own selfish objects, would poison the royal ear, and who, if allowed to remain, would prove the destruction either of the Prince or the country." Lord Grey concluded an eloquent speech by declaring "that there existed an unseen and pestilent influence behind the throne, which it would be the duty of Parliament to brand with some signal mark of condemnation. It was the determination of himself and his friends not to accept office without coming to an understanding with Parliament for the abolition of this destructive influence." Subsequently, May 4th, during a discussion in the House of Commons, Mr. Lyttleton stated that "it was notorious that the Regent was surrounded with favourites, and, as it were, hemmed in with minions, not one of whom was of any character."[1]

It is now necessary to proceed to the next negociation.

Minute of a communication made by Lord Wellesley to Lord Grey, at Lord Grey's.

June 1, 1812.

Lord Wellesley stated that he had, on that morning, received full authority from the Prince Regent to form an Administration under his Royal Highness's commands; and that he was specially authorized to communicate with Lords Grey and Grenville on the subject.

That his Royal Highness entertained no wish to exclude from the proposed Administration any person or description of persons, who could unite in the principles on which the Administration was to be founded.

That the two propositions stated in Lord Wellesley's minute of 23rd May, and subsequently explained in the letters (which passed between Lord Wellesley and Lord Grey, of the dates of 27th, 28th, and 29th May, 1812) were intended by his Royal Highness to constitute the foundation of his Administration.

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[1] See "Hansard."

That his Royal Highness had signified his pleasure that Lord Wellesley should conduct the formation of the Administration in all its branches; and should be First Commissioner of the Treasury; and that Lord Moira, Lord Erskine, and Mr. Canning, should be members of the Cabinet.

That it was probable that a Cabinet, formed on an enlarged basis, must be extended to the number of twelve or thirteen members.

That the Prince Regent wished Lords Grey and Grenville, on the part of their friends, to recommend for his Royal Highness's approbation the names of four persons (if the Cabinet should consist of twelve) and of five persons (if the Cabinet should consist of thirteen) to be appointed by his Royal Highness to fill such stations in his councils as might hereafter be arranged.

That his Royal Highness left the selection of the names to Lords Grey and Grenville, without any exception or personal exclusion.

That in completing the new arrangement, the Prince Regent has granted to Lord Wellesley, entire liberty to propose, for his Royal Highness's approbation, the names of any persons now occupying stations in his Royal Highness's councils, or of any other persons.

That if the proposition made to Lords Grey and Grenville should be accepted, as the outline of an arrangement, all other matters would be discussed with the most anxious solicitude to promote harmony, and general accommodation.

WELLESLEY.

Lord Grey replied on the following day, stating that the minute had been communicated to Lord Grenville, who, with himself desired a further reference to their friends before they transmitted their final answer. This, however, apparently did not take much time for reflection; for their joint answer was sent on the 3rd.

LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY TO THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

Camelford House, June 3, 1812

My Lord,

We have considered with the most serious attention the minute which we have had the honour to receive from your Lordship, and have communicated it to such of our friends as we have had the opportunity of consulting. On the occasion of such a proposal made to us under the authority of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, we wish to renew, in the most solemn manner, the declaration of our unfeigned desire to have facilitated, as far as was in our power, the means of giving effect to the late vote of the House of Commons, and of averting the imminent and unparalleled dangers of the country. No sense of the public distress and difficulty, no personal feelings of whatever description, would have prevented us, under such circumstances, from accepting with dutiful submission any situations in which we could have hoped to serve his Royal Highness usefully and honourably.

But it appeared to us on the most dispassionate reflection, that the proposal stated to us by your Lordship, cannot justify any such expectations. We are invited, not to discuss with your Lordship or with any other public men, according to the usual practice in such cases, the various and important considerations, both of measures and arrangements, which belong to the formation of a new Government in all its branches, but to recommend to his Royal Highness a number limited by previous stipulation, of persons willing to be included in a Cabinet of which the outlines are already definitively arranged.

To this proposal, we could not accede, without the sacrifice of that very object which the House of Commons has recommended—the formation of a strong and efficient Government. We enter not into the examination of the relative proportions, or of the particular arrangements which it has been judged necessary thus previously to establish. It is to the principle of disunion and jealousy that we object—to the supposed balance of contending interests in a Cabinet so measured out by preliminary stipulation. The times imperiously require an Administration united in principle, and strong in mutual reliance: possessing also the confidence of the Crown, and assured of its support in those healing measures which the public safety requires, and which are necessary to secure to the Government the opinion and affections of the people. No such hope is presented to us by this project, which appears to us equally new in practice and objectionable in principle. It tends, as we think, to establish within the Cabinet itself, a system of counteraction inconsistent with the prosecution of any uniform and beneficial course of policy. We must, therefore, request permission to decline all participation in a Government constituted on such principles; satisfied as we are that the certain loss of character to ourselves, could be productive only of disunion and weakness in the Administration of the public interests.

Grey.
Grenville.

On the 3rd of June, Lord Moira wrote an explanatory letter to Lord Grey, as a rejoinder to the joint communication from Lords Grey and Grenville, or rather to that portion which, he states, "seems to throw an oblique imputation" on himself, justifying the proposed arrangement of the Cabinet, which had just been sent to Lord Wellesley, and returned with a note of approval. To this Lord Grey replied on the following day, stating that neither himself nor Lord Grenville desired to cast any imputation upon him, and declining to renew a controversial discussion on points they had already decided. Lord Wellesley also wrote on the 3rd to Lords Grey and Grenville, proposing explanatory observations, yet acknowledging that the negociation had been taken out of his hands; and again wrote to Lord Grey on the 4th, to apprise him that neither Lord Moira nor himself had any authority from the Prince to make the proposed explanatory observations, yet expressing a wish for an opportunity to renew an intercourse under his Royal Highness's commands. Lord Grey's answer came in due course, stating that he was aware that Lord Moira's communication was unauthorised, but was happy to receive it as an expression of personal regard.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dearest Brother,

I have just copied out for you Lord Wellesley's paper, which I trust you will agree in thinking as unacceptable as it appears to all of us to be.

Lord Grenville arrived at ten this morning, and having consulted with ten or twelve friends, he is drawing out a negative answer, which is to be read over to-night; and if approved by our friends, it will be sent to-morrow morning.

In the meantime, Lord Grey has sent a private note to Lord Wellesley, to tell him that the necessary communications may retard our formal answer till to-morrow; but that he thinks it fair now, to tell him that both Lord Grenville, and every other person whom he, Lord Grey, has as yet consulted with, agree in seeing the proposal with the same impression with which it was first seen by Lord Grey, in Lord Wellesley's conversation with him upon it; viz., as one that could not probably lead to any favourable result.

It is plain, by what I hear, that Wellesley, Moira, Canning, Sheridan, Hutchinson, perhaps, too, Lord Melville, Lord Chichester, and Grant as Chancellor, will try the government.

They will make an outcry against us, because they choose to represent Lord Moira and Lord Erskine, as two of our friends; who, being added to the two Lords G., and three others, would make, as they say, seven with us against six. But they very well know that Moira is against us upon the Household Question, and would, in such a government, be the Prince's Minister much more than our friend. Erskine, though named of their Cabinet, was not intended by them as Chancellor: but he has attended our meeting, and approves entirely of a negative being given; so that he will not belong to them.

I rejoice in seeing this conclusion, as far as my brother and my friends are concerned.

The "conclusion," however, was still distant, as will be seen by the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

[1812.]

THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY PROCLAIMS THE EXISTENCE OF DREADFUL ANIMOSITIES—DISCUSSION ON THE LATE NEGOCIATION IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS—PROPOSALS FOR A NEW CABINET—LORD CHOLMONDELEY'S LUCK—LORD MOIRA NEGOCIATES WITH LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY—LORD GRENVILLE'S STATEMENT—MINUTE OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY, AND LORD MOIRA—LORD MOIRA'S CHIVALRY — SHERIDAN'S LAST POLITICAL TRICK — PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS—THE LORD CHANCELLOR'S OPINIONS RESPECTING HIS COLLEAGUES AND OPPONENTS — SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY ON THE INSINCERITY OF THE LATE NEGOCIATION — THE HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Marquis Wellesley in the House of Lords, June 3, made a statement of his failure as a negociator; at the conclusion of his speech stating, with much emphasis, that "great animosities, dreadful animosities had prevailed—animosities deeply to be lamented, and which might be attended with the most alarming consequences in the present critical state of the country." Lord Grenville disclaimed on his own part, and that of his noble friend, Lord Grey, anything like animosity. No such feeling had ever entered their minds. The Earl of Liverpool made a similar disclaimer for himself and his colleagues.

On the following day, Earl Moira resumed the discussion by denying that such feelings were entertained by the Prince Regent, and, attributing the failure of the negociation to a misconception. This brought up Lord Grenville, who argued that misconception was impossible, as the document submitted to him had clearly stated the Prince Regent's pleasure as to the persons who should fill particular offices in the Government.

Lord Moira still insisting that there had been a misconception, Earl Grey rose and read the minute, adding that both Lord Wellesley and Lord Moira had expressly stated that they had no authority to depart from such instructions. Lord Moira, however, could not be got to alter his view of the case, that it was merely a statement of a wish on the part of the Prince Regent, who believed the proposed persons would be acceptable to Lords Grey and Grenville. Lord Erskine declared that he had regarded the proposal in the same light as Lords Grey and Grenville, and that their acceptance of office upon such terms would have deprived them of the power of acting conscientiously; and after a few more remarks from other noble lords, the discussion closed.

It is almost impossible to convey an adequate idea of the uneasy feeling that was spreading among the more disinterested portion of the political world, in consequence of the obstacles that prevented a satisfactory arrangement between the several negociators for a new Administration. It is evident that the chiefs of the Opposition knew the insecurity of the position to which they were invited, and would not accede to any proposals which did not afford those guarantees they required; whilst the Prince, forced by the pressure of public opinion to look for assistance where he least desired to obtain it, took advantage of every manœuvre suggested to him, to render such assistance temporary, or to prevent its being given. Each of the high contracting parties was equally alarmed, whenever there seemed a prospect of their junction; and in such a mood they were, of course, ready to avail themselves of any incident, however trifling, that permitted their breaking off the negociation.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

June 4.

Dearest Brother,

There has been a letter from Moira· to Grey, in which he labours to prove our misapprehension of the proposal, and avers that the intention was to have made all the other members of the proposed Cabinet subject to Lords Grey and Grenville's approbation, and in like manner, every other branch of the Administration, &c., all of which, is the very reverse of Lord Wellesley's paper. Grey's answer has been one of personal kindness to Lord Moira, but stating that the general character of Lord Wellesley's paper appeared to him to demand the answer that is made, and referring entirely to the formal paper and the formal answer, as the only safe grounds of negociation, instead of resorting to subsequent and individual explanation.

They are all gone to Windsor, to the Queen, on the King's birth-day, which gives us a holiday for to-day; but I am strongly persuaded that to-morrow will bring another proposition of some sort.

I am assured that the Queen and the Duke of York are both anxious with the Prince, to resort to the Opposition fairly, because they see no other chance of any Government, and are beginning to take great alarm.

This is to me very fearful, for I still wish for Wellesley or

Moira to have a Government of their own in the present moment.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GNENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

June 5, 1812.

Dearest Brother,

I write to say that there is nothing to say.

The Prince returned from Windsor last night at ten, and nothing has been heard this morning from any authentic source.

It seems quite ascertained that Canning, as well as Wellesley, disclaim all share in Lord Moira's proposed Government; and, therefore, nothing remains but for Lord Moira to throw himself upon the old Government, or to bring a more unqualified and admissible offer to Opposition.

William's Dropmore sympathies teach him to tell himself that Lord Moira will to-day announce his having made progress in a new frame of Government, in which case, Lord Grenville will set forth to Dropmore to-morrow. He cannot more fervently wish himself there, than I wish him there, but my mind misgives me as to Lord Moira's embryo, and I am still fearful that something will at last be said that may not bear a negative.

I suppose you have heard of Lord Cholmondeley's luck: the old Lord Orford made a settlement in 1782, in favour of Trefusis Lord Clinton, as heir to the old man's mother, who had been a Rolle; but it appears that he had subsequently made a mortgage, which operated as a resumption of the settlement, and vests the estate in Lord Cholmondeley, as Lord Orford's representative, and the leasehold in Mrs. John Damer. This blot has been hit, by Lord Clinton's wanting to raise money on mortgage, and in examining his title. It appears, by the opinion of Richards and Romilly, that Lord Clinton has never had any title, so that he will have rents to refund, and timber &c., &c., and, moreover, all his leases being void, the estate will come to Lord Cholmondeley out of lease, and, therefore, worth £28,000 per annum: Sir R. Palk loses £44,000, which he had lent Lord Clinton on mortgage.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, June 5, 1812.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I have been able only to write to you a few short notes; but you will allow for the hurry of such a moment, especially as I sensibly feel that I am not what I was, and that I must now have air and exercise, and relaxation, which I could formerly dispense with, when business was to be done, and make the business itself stand for all. But this will not do now; and as often as I try it, I am tired out, and obliged to stop.

I grieve to say it, but my own opinion now is that the thing *must* finally come to us in a shape in which we shall be compelled to look at it. The present state of things is, as I suppose you understand, that Moira stands charged to form a government, and is at this hour, not only first, but sole Minister, having no associate that I can hear of, but Sheridan.

Erskine, Grant, Wellesley, and Canning, are said to have all refused to have any concern with the undertaking. Whether he will look to the old Ministers, I know not, but I do not expect he will; and if he does not, where else he is to go, I cannot conceive. He complained to Erskine that Grey's answer to his explanatory letter (which answer was couched merely in terms of personal courtesy) seemed intended to shut the door against all further explanation. Grey authorized Erskine to say that it was meant neither to preclude, nor to invite, fresh discussion. This may possibly lead to more *writing*, but I do not believe the Prince Regent is yet in such a state of mind as to enable him to see his situation clearly before him, and to act upon it in the only reasonable way, by submitting to the necessities imposed upon him by the constitution of the limited monarchy which he administers.

In the mean time, the people grow impatient, and the House of Commons indignant; the money will not hold out many days longer, and we seem to be threatened with war from America. It is a dreadful prospect, but I fear the burden must come upon the shoulders of the two people in England who, perhaps, least deserve it; and come with the increased weight arising from the declared hostility of the Prince we are to serve.

Such as it is, however, there it is—the wine is poured out—*il faut le boire.*

The Earl of Moira addressed a note (June 5,) to Lords Grenville and Grey, and proposed an interview, hinting that he had not yet obtained the Prince Regent's permission to address them formally. Their reply of the same date declined entering upon unauthorized discussions, but professed readiness to receive his Royal Highness's commands through any channel he might be pleased to signify to them. This elicited from Lord Moira, on the following day, that he possessed the Prince's instructions to take steps towards the formation of a

Ministry, and to address himself with that object to them; and he required to be allowed to bring Lord Erskine. On the same day, the four Lords assisted in the conversation detailed in the minute. But Lord Grenville's and his brother's statements of what occurred in the interviews, must have precedence.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, June 6, 1812, half-past 5.

We had last night, a paper from Moira, inviting further interview, which we declined on the ground of the want of authority. To-day, he has obtained full powers to treat with us without restriction or limitation. We discussed satisfactorily some points of measures, but no official arrangements. Grey asked whether the Household was reserved. He said the Prince had made no reserve on that point, but that he, Moira, never could concur in such a measure. We said we deemed it indispensable to act on the same principle now, as had been usually acted upon in similar instances; and here the thing broke off, and the conversation ended; and we reduced it to a minute something longer than the above, but substantially the same.

I have not time to copy the papers for you to-day. I hardly dare hope that the thing is over yet. My apprehension is that the Household officers will resign; though I rather hope that the Prince or Moira will make a point of keeping them; for the nearer I look at this, the less hope I can have of really doing any good. I do not expect that our ground will be popular with our friends, but I think it is solid.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, June, 1812.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

You will read in the papers of the strange discussion that took place yesterday in the House of Lords; where Moira, having asserted that no stipulation had been made in Lord Wellesley's proposal, either for any particular office, or any particular person, was answered by Lord Grey's reading from the proposal itself the precise stipulation of First Commissioner of Treasury, and the names of Wellesley, Moira, Erskine, and Canning. Lord Moira tried to explain this away, but made a most miserable and unintelligible piece of work of it, which nobody ever affected to comprehend; he turns out in all these details to be much below the estimation in which he was held; he made a fruitless effort yesterday evening, by desiring the Duke of Bedford to carry a paper to the Lords Grey and Grenville, in which he professed to be ready to hold a conference with them for explanation, if they thought the conference would lead to such an amicable understanding as might induce the Prince to authorize Moira to communicate with them, &c. To this, they answered in writing, with terms of civility to Lord Moira, that they could not seek for, or enter into individual explanation that was unauthorized by the Prince, nor could take any step towards the offer of any suggestion or advice to his Royal Highness, without having been previously commanded so to do. They all slept upon this answer, and this morning Lord Moira sent Erskine with a note from himself, saying that he had received the commands of the Prince Regent to form the plan of a Government, and specially to communicate upon it with Lords Grey and Grenville, and, therefore, offered to call upon them. Lord Grey was out, and could not be found till near two, at which time, they both went to Lord Moira's house, together with Erskine, who attended at Lord Moira's desire.

It is now five, and they are still in St. James's Place, so that I fear no result will be known before the post goes out; but they went with an intention to desire to have in writing whatever Lord Moira had to propose to them, and I trust they will adhere to this resolution, the necessity of which appears plainly enough from yesterday's House of Lords. I am, myself, uneasy to find the negociation resumed, having taught myself to believe that, for many reasons, it was desirable, if possible, that our friends should not come in till another experiment should have been made and failed.

The best chance for the escape of our friends is, that the Prince should still have instructed Lord Moira to make some preliminary reserve; if so, they are free again, for they are well agreed and determined to decline all discussion, unless the whole subject be entirely free and unshackled, both as to measures, offices, and men; yet, by the length of the conference, I fear it is all going on.

Minute of a Conversation between Lords Grey and Grenville, and Lord Moira.

St. James's Place, June 6, 1812.

Lord Moira stated to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, that he was authorized by the Prince Regent to consult with them on the formation of a new government; and satisfactory explanations having taken place between them, respecting such measures as appeared to be of the greatest urgency at the present moment, more especially with reference to the situation of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, and the differences now unhappily subsisting with America; and that Lord Moira had received this commission without any restriction or limitation whatever being laid by the Prince, on their considering any points which they judged useful for his service; they expressed their satisfaction with the fairness of this proposal, and their readiness to enter into such discussions as must precede the details of any new arrangement. As a preliminary question, which appeared to them of great importance, and which they thought it necessary immediately to bring forward, to prevent the inconvenience and embarrassment of the further delay which might be produced if the negociation should break off in a more advanced state, they asked whether this full liberty extended to the consideration of new appointments to those great offices of the Household, which have been usually included in the political arrangements made on a change of Administration, intimating their opinion, that it would be necessary to act on the same principle on the present occasion.

Lord Moira answered, that the Prince had laid no restriction upon him, in that respect; and had never pointed, in the most distant manner, at the protection of those officers from removal; that it would, however, be impossible for him to concur in making the exercise of this power positive and indispensable in the formation of the Administration, because he should deem it on public grounds peculiarly objectionable.

To this, Lord Grey and Lord Grenville replied, they also acted on public grounds alone, and with no other feelings whatever than that which arose from the necessity of giving to a new Government that character of efficiency and stability, and those marks of the constitutional support of the Crown, which were required to enable it to act usefully for the public service; and that on these grounds, it appeared to them indispensable that the connection of the great offices of the Court with the political administration, should be clearly established in its first arrangements.

A decided difference of opinion as to this point, having been expressed on both sides, the conversation ended here, with mutual expressions of regret.

Nothing was said on the subject of official arrangements, nor any person proposed, on either side, to fill any particular situations.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Quarter past 5.

My brother and Lord Grey are just come in from Lord Moira to tell me that it is all well over. Lord Moira announced that he was ready to treat without any reserve on the part of the Prince. They talked generally of Ireland, America, and Spain, and then occasion was taken by Lord Grey to ——

William tells me he has written to you a few lines which will better explain the thing.

He is afraid, and so am I, that Hertford and Yarmouth will resign. How can Lord Moira forget that in our last government, to which he belonged, we all made it a great concession to the King, to suffer him to keep a part of his Household; how then can Lord Moira assert his principle against touching the Household?

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, June 8, 1812.

Every thing is, I believe, happily settled, and Lord Moira's

Government is launched. Wellesley and Canning join it, they keep Melville, and get Lord Chichester as a recruit! It is also said, that Sheridan is to strengthen their Cabinet by his accession to it. About the Great Seal, I hear nothing. Moira told us in the conversation of Saturday, that he had explained to Eldon that they could not sit in Cabinet together, because though Eldon professed himself ready to go into the consideration of the Catholic Question, still his consideration of that question would be so different from Moira's, that they could not act together.

Whether the necessity of the present hour will alter this or not, I cannot say. On this will probably in some degree depend how far the old Government will support or oppose, though their disposition must be to the latter, from their dreadful animosity to Wellesley.

I would send you a copy of the minute of the conversation, but I have no other, and I may want it in the House to-day, and have nobody here to copy it. The substance, and, indeed, all the material words, you will see faithfully stated in the 'Morning Chronicle' and 'Press.'

It has been confidently stated, that when Lord Moira asked the Prince Regent whether his Royal Highness would consent to part with his Household, the Prince answering in the affirmative, his Lordship "chivalrously" assured him that he would not consent to one of them being changed. It should be remembered that the officers of the Royal Household, as a matter of course, resigned with the ministry. In this instance, there were particular reasons for the Prince desiring them to remain. The reasons why Lord Grenville ought to have insisted on their departure, arose from a knowledge of the ill-feeling he had excited in the Hertford family by his recal of Lord Yarmouth from Paris, when the latter was acting as a negociator in 1806. But neither Lord Grenville nor Lord Grey could have expected to have profited by their resignation. Indeed, the ill feeling must have been strengthened by it; and the channel for making it formidable could not be removed. Lord Moira must have been perfectly aware of this.

Moore, in one of his gossiping letters, treats this incident very much as it deserves to be treated. "It will puzzle me to tell you why Lord Moira, from a high-flown sense of honour, quite above the common flight of common understandings, has thought it right, and loyal, and patriotic to keep in a set of ministers, whom he has hitherto appeared to think knaves and fools, and to be the champion of Lord Yarmouth, &c., for whom he feels a thorough contempt. And when he thought the salvation of the country depended upon Catholic Emancipation, and the Repeal of the Orders in Council —in short, upon a total change of men and measures, *why* he sacrificed his poor, dear country, and only thought of saving Lord Hertford's and Lord Yarmouth's places, and all in the name of *honour*, is what I never can tell you. At least, I can only tell you that his friends say it was all *honour*—that Lord Yarmouth had behaved particularly ill to him, and that he felt it was *a point of honour* not to allow the Prince to dismiss him, lest it might be supposed he was actuated by personal pique; that it would be acknowledging that he believed in the influence of the house of Hertford over the Prince, if he recommended their dismissal; that Lord Grey and Lord Grenville insisted upon it in so high a tone, that yielding to them was lowering the Prince; so that over and above his own tremendous honour, he took the Prince's also under his protection—*c'était bien peu de chose.* There he made his stand. And I am firmly persuaded that he acted a most disinterested part, and that he has been the dupe of his own honourable feelings, *and the Prince's tears.*"[1]

There is a passage in one of Miss Godfrey's letters to Thomas Moore, in which, after relating the manner in which the Regent slighted Lord Moira after the negociation, she adds: "next day the Prince had a great dinner of what he called friends, to which Lord Moira was not invited, and three times that day, before dinner and after dinner, he declared that if Lord Grenville had been *forced* upon him, he should have *abdicated.* This was his expression—a friend of our's was there, and asked if this declaration was to be kept a secret, and one of the Princes who was present told him not, that the Regent wished to have it known. This is an absolute fact, and shows what a dupe poor Lord Moirawas."[2]

As initials only are generally used for names in this correspondence, most probably Lord Grenville has here been substituted for Lord Grey, against whom the Prince had more than once expressed a decided aversion, in consequence of the freedom of some of his remarks in the

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[1] "Memoirs," Vol. I., p. 287.

"Idem," Vol I., p. 296.

House of Peers. Against Lord Grenville, as already stated, the feelings of his Royal Highness were not so strong.[1]

Sheridan in the course of this negociation, contrived another spiteful trick against the particular objects of his malevolence, Lords Grenville and Grey; for when Lord Yarmouth empowered him to communicate to those noble Lords, the intention of the Household to resign, he said and did all he could to prevent such resignation, suppressed the message, and when asked by Mr. Tierney whether snch a step was in contemplation, offered to bet five hundred guineas, that such an idea had never been entertained. In this transaction, his biographer completely breaks down in his apologies, and ventures scarcely a word in his defence. Indeed, he considers it "the only indefensible part of his whole public life." Mr. Moore confesses, "he was in some degree, no doubt, influenced by personal feelings against the two noble Lords, whom his want of fairness on the occasion, was so well calculated to thwart and embarrass. But the main motive of the whole proceeding is to be found in his devoted deference to what he knew to be the wishes of that personage, who had become now more than ever the mainspring of all his movements—whose spell over him in this instance, was too strong for even *his sense of character*, (?) and to whom he might well have applied the words of one of his own beautiful songs.

> "Friends, fortune, *fame itself*, I'd lose,
> To gain one smile from thee!"[2]

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[1] See ante, pp. 296, 298, 300.

[2] Moore's "Life of Sheridan," Vol. II., p. 426.

Such a line of argument does not improve the case, either of Sheridan or of his patron; and we refrain from expressing the opinion both its admissions must excite in every well-regulated mind. This, however, was the last opportunity Sheridan ever possessed of doing mischief in the same direction. Shortly afterwards, his connection with the Court and with Parliament ceased, never to be resumed; and the remainder of his career was a slough of despond.

On Lord Liverpool announcing that the Prince Regent had appointed him First Lord of the Treasury, and that the other appointments would be filled up as speedily as possible, Lord Moira went into a detail of his abortive negociation, in which, so far from attributing *his* failure to animosities, he affirmed that he had found harmony in every direction; adding, that Lords Grey and Grenville had met him in the spirit of frankness, and he had only to regret that their view of their duty had not permitted them to come to that arrangement which he so anxiously desired.

This conciliatory speech, and more to the same purpose, did not produce the desired effect. The Duke of Norfolk referred to the Address of the House of Commons, urging the formation of a more efficient administration; which brought Lord Liverpool on his legs, to express that both himself and his colleagues had been most anxious that there should be no obstacle to the formation of a strong administration.

On hearing this assertion, the Marquis Wellesley rose, and gave the last speaker a positive contradiction, assuring the House that he had been met with frankness in every quarter, except from the ministers and their friends, whom he charged with being the only obstacles to the formation of the desired administration. This brought up Lord Harrowby to demand an explanation, which elicited from Lord Wellesley a more distinct charge against Lords Harrowby and Liverpool. Lord Harrowby then made a denial of personal animosity, and complained of the publication of Lord Wellesley's statement respecting the motives for his resignation under Mr. Perceval. The publication of this, Lord Wellesley disclaimed, and stated it to have been in language that he would not have sanctioned. After a few words from Lord Harrowby, Lord Grey expressed his conviction that in the offer made to himself and Lord Grenville, it was intended that all their principles and measures should be overruled, but acquitted Lords Wellesley and Moira of any knowledge of the secret management that accompanied the business. Lord Moira, however, declined to accept a compliment to his honour at the expense of his understanding; which caused Lord Grey to explain that such was the impression on his mind: when Lord Moira professed himself satisfied, and the conversation terminated.[1]

On the 11th of June, an animated discussion took place in the House of Commons, on Mr. Wortley's motion for an address to the Regent, when Lord Yarmouth stated it had, from the first, been the intention of the Household to resign. Mr. Canning asserted, that in a conversation in which the Prince had offered to part with them, Lord Moira had expressed his determination that none of them should resign, and Mr. Tierney expressed his disbelief in their ever having had the slightest intention of resigning, which was based upon a wager offered by Sheridan, for five hundred guineas, that nothing of the kind was in contemplation. Lord Wilton brought forward an amendment on the address, expressing a desire for an Administration in which the country could place confidence; but it was lost by a majority for ministers of one hundred and twenty-five.[1]

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[1] See "Debates."

A few days afterwards, Mr. Sheridan attempted more than one explanation, but as he acknowledged to the wager, and that he disliked the idea of the Household resigning, he left the case exactly as it stood.

The fact was, great pains were taken to lay the blame on Lords Grenville and Grey, as men who had proved themselves impracticable, unreasonable, and exacting; nothing, however, could be more opposed to the facts; which a calm review of the negociations, coupled with a knowledge of the peculiar position of some of the most zealous friends of the Government, must satisfy every unprejudiced mind.

There was no more Parliamentary discussion on these delicate points, though there was a sharp debate in the

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[1] See "Debates."

House of Lords on the 1st of July, when the Marquis Wellesley moved a resolution, pledging the House to the consideration of the Catholic Claims, next Session, which was lost by a majority of one only. On the 30th, Parliament was prorogued with the usual speech.

Lord Eldon, probably aided by Lord Sidmouth, appears to have been the chief source of all these fruitless communications. In a letter to his brother, written about the 18th of May, he confesses to a foregone conclusion. "Most think that Wellesley and Grenville will not come upon these terms; *they will be accepted upon no other.* My opinion is, that both are so sick of being out, that they *will* come upon such terms. *If they don't, we shall try what we can do without them.* Upon this, there are three opinions—two among *us*: that is, *I* think *that* may and *will go on*—all the rest think that it must be tried, but that it *cannot go on*, and that things will fall into the hands of Grey and Grenville, nearly forthwith. A third opinion comes from gentlemen of the House of Commons, who think it will go on, and who are not inclined to support at all, if Wellesley and Grenville *do* come in. Upon this last opinion, however, it is too late to act, if they bite. *Lord Sidmouth has behaved very well, certainly*; *so has the Regent.*"[1]

Nothing can be more clear here, than the intention that they should not "bite;" or on the part of their opponents, that they would not.

Something closely resembling corroboration of this view of the case, exists in a letter from Lord Sidmouth to his brother, dated May 15. "As to other points, I can only say that it is *the wish of the Prince Regent to retain all his present servants, and that they will not desert him.* They are perfectly united, and I have no doubt will act cordially together."[1]

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[1] Twiss's "Life of Lord Eldon," Vol. I., p. 494.

An excellent authority confidently states that the whole of the negociations for a new ministry, were conducted unquestionably with a previous determination on the part of the Prince, and of those who enjoy his confidence, that they should not end in Lord Grey and Lord Grenville and their friends, being in power.

"The Lord Chancellor (Eldon) has never, from the moment of the address of the House of Commons being carried, shown the least symptoms of apprehension that he was to resign his office. During these three weeks that the Ministers have been represented by themselves, as holding their offices only till their successors should be named, he has given judgment in none of the numerous causes, petitions, and motions, which have been long waiting his decision; though there never before was an instance of a Chancellor about to resign the Great Seal, who did not hasten to clear away all the arrears of his Court. Instead of this, Lord Eldon has been every day closeted with the Duke of Cumberland; and during several days in the term, *the Court has been entirely shut up*, while his Lordship was employed in some way never known to the suitors of his Court, or to the public. We have even had the Duke of Cumberland coming down to Westminster Hall, and sending for the Chancellor *out of Court.* The whole matter has ended pretty much as I expected. It might have been much worse, if Lords Grey and Grenville had not been deterred from taking office by the obstacles which were purposely thrown in their way. They would have been suffered to remain in the ministry but a very short time; some pretext would have been anxiously watched for, and eagerly seized, to turn them out with loss of character; or a new cry against Popery would have been raised, and they would probably have been the victims of it."[1]

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[1] Dr. Pellew's "Life of Lord Sidmouth," Vol. III.

The following letter affords strong confirmation of the foregoing statement respecting a pre-conceived intention, on the part, at least of the Prince Regent's friends, that these negociations should be nothing but a Comedy of Errors.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

June 9, 1812.

DEAREST BROTHER,

Fremantle's coach-letter of this day, will have told you the result of what passed yesterday in the two Houses, and the newspapers of this post will give you the details. I learn from every body that Lord Wellesley's and Lord Grey's speeches were as good for their respective purposes as it was possible to be, and the general cry in the House of Lords was very manifestly and decidedly with us; nor was Liverpool able to rouse himself from the most striking appearance of fear and dejection.

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[1] "Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly," Vol. III., p. 42.—But the party of which Lords Grenville and Grey were the leaders, appear to have been quite as averse to a change of position as themselves. Mr. Henry Brougham, then rising into influence, writes, "The opposition, (with a few exceptions) are all against their coming into office, and I am sure Whitbread, Coke, &c., will be decidedly so."—"Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. I., p. 139.

Our friends speak likewise with satisfaction of the House of Commons, and with a confident expectation of a majority for Thursday. Those who are in the House may be better judges than I can be, who am out of it; but, for myself, I am completely disgusted and scandalized to see, that after such an outrageous insult offered to the House of Commons, after the unprecedented contempt shown to their address, by the re-appointment of the same Lord Liverpool, Castlereagh, &c., in the very teeth, too, of the promise of the Prince Regent in his answer that he would lose no time, &c., after all this, to see that neither Ponsonby nor Tierney, nor any one member of Parliament thought fit to call the attention of the House to what had just happened, and that there should be nothing but a quiet talk about Orders of Council, and a general rush to the House of Lords, to hear the sport there—all this does, I confess, look to me like the consummation of the insignificance and degradation of the House of Commons. Of course, I do not hold the language of disappointment as to Thursday's division, because that language always is disadvantageous on critical questions. But to you, I have no scruple of saying that I do not at all partake of the numerical confidence with which I see our friends cheering one another for Thursday. The game now playing against us is a desperate chance indeed, which, if the House of Commons were true to itself, would be a fearful hazard for a good deal more than the personal safety of Ministers, but desperate as this game is in appearance, I feel quite convinced that it is a deliberate plan, devised with long preparation, and, therefore, probably assisted with such force as our adversaries believe will safely carry them through. As long ago as Sunday sen'night, Lord Hertford told old Sloane that he would ensure to him the continuance of the old Government; as long ago as Thursday last, your friend Ward sent up for Sir M. Sykes from the country, telling him that he would be wanted to support the old Government, who were expected to be called to resume their offices by the Regent; and early on Sunday, a great prelate, a friend of mine, remarking to the Duke of Cumberland that Moira was said to have completed his Government, was answered, "do not be such a fool as to believe him—it is to be the old Government again."

CHAPTER XIV.

[1812.]

COMMENDATION OF THE CONDUCT OF LORDS GRENVILLE AND GREY, AND THEIR DEFENCE — MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT — RUMOURS RESPECTING THE NEW MINISTRY—THE PRINCE REGENT DECIDES ON RETAINING HIS OLD GOVERNMENT—LORD GRENVILLE'S CONGRATULATIONS ON HIS NARROW ESCAPE—DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT —LORD SIDMOUTH APPOINTED SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT — AFFAIRS IN THE PENINSULA, AND VICTORY OF SALAMANCA—GRAND CAVALRY CHARGE—MINISTERIAL DELINQUENCIES —LORD WELLINGTON POWERFULLY SUPPORTED BY LORD CASTLEREAGH.

CHAPTER XIV.

One of the most gratifying among contemporary evidence of the upright conduct of Lord Grenville and his friends while mixed up with these "remarkable transactions," will be found in a letter written on the 18th of June, by a statesman of high character. "I would have written to you more frequently," he says, "during the late remarkable transactions in politics, if the nature of what passed, and the way in which I obtained from time to time some knowledge of it, had admitted of any intelligible communications in an abridged shape. The apparent changes of conduct succeeded each other so rapidly, that the story of one day looked like nothing but a contradiction of that before it, though all have, in the end, proved to be true. Nor was it possible, while the thing was going on, to adopt with confidence any conjecture that seemed to solve such contrarieties, until the most recent disclosures explained them, by proving a depth of intrigue, which upon mere guess was hard to be believed. The result has probably been an unfortunate one for the country, because an Administration with Grenville, Grey, and some others included in it, might perhaps have brought about successfully some of those changes in our policy, both foreign and internal, which they think so desirable; at the same time the public voice would second them so reluctantly in those measures, and would be so much upon the watch to dissappoint them, if there was any difficulty to be overcome, that I trembled for my friends and for their cause, when I thought them upon the brink of an Administration, in which they were preparing to undertake the government under such difficulties as the present, without either Court favour or a popular cry. From all this they were saved: not by any want of courage on their side, but by the triumph of inveterate duplicity, and the low arts of a palace, over an inflexible and proud integrity."[1]

The same upright and able politician in writing to the historian Hallam, on the 24th of July, adds:

"I regret very much that you are not satisfied with the conduct of Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, in their rupture of the negociation. It is perhaps a nice question of conduct, and one of those in which there is hardly any other test but success, to be resorted to. Upon the whole circumstances, particularly with what has been added to our knowledge of them by Lord Moira's subsequent conduct, and by Lord Spencer's statement in the House of Lords, I think their mode of closing the negociation was the most honourable and upright for themselves, though with a little more reserve they might have left it to be terminated with more disgrace by the Prince. I was prepared, I own at the same time, to pardon them if they had been less sturdy about the Household, and thought if there was a possibility of their getting power with the views they had of using it, that they might be defended against the abuse that was in preparation for them, if they should have yielded to the Court its pretensions respecting the Household. I am now satisfied, looking back to the whole intrigue, that they never had any chance of coming into office; and am somewhat inclined to apprehend, that the high tone of personal honour, and the strict stoical maxims of political conduct, which the present leaders of the Whig Opposition are guided by, in their negociations about office—and without the observance of which, power can have but little to gratify such men—are not calculated to obtain place for them, except in a favourable conjunction of accidents, or to win immediate favour for them with the public, whether they gain the places, or are dissappointed. I will not say that nothing of the peculiarities of temper was to be detected in their prompt and peremptory manner of negociating; but on the other hand, they negociated with all the odds against them, arising from their integrity and rigid honour being known to those who intrigued against them with fewer scruples. Never was there a time in my remembrance of politics, which brought out in so strong a light, the characters of all the persons engaged in the transactions; and I am sorry to say, that some, of whom I was anxious to form, or to keep a high opinion, such as Canning and Whitbread, sunk a great way in my estimation before it was all over."[1]

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[1] "Memoirs and Correspondence of Francis Horner, M.P.," Vol. II., p. 111.

But the whole play had not been played out, as will be seen by a perusal of the continuation of the Correspondence.

EARL SPENCER TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

House of Lords, June 9, 1812, quarter past 5, P.M.

MY DEAR LORD,

As I ventured to scribble a line to you from hence, yesterday, I take the opportunity of doing so again to-day, to tell you the little news I have been able to pick up here, since I came down to the House; some of which is curious enough.

There was a meeting at Fife House this morning, of the friends of the present Government, at which I understand, upon good authority, it was agreed to entertain the Catholic Question, in some shape or other, during this Session. I am not sure in what shape exactly they mean to entertain it, as it is repeated by some persons that they will agree to Canning's motion, and by others, that they will go into committee in both Houses on the subject; but they certainly have determined to yield in some degree (at least apparently)—that they really mean to yield, I cannot, nor will you believe.

Lord Moira has accepted the Garter—whether as a calm to his honour or his understanding, it is not for me to say.

The Duke of Norfolk applied for an audience of the Prince Regent, which was declined, and his Grace went out of town last night.

The friends of Government talk very sanguinely of the event of Wortley's motion on Thursday; our friends, however, are equally sanguine.

Yours, my dear Lord, ever truly,

SPENCER.

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[1] "Diary and Correspondence of Francis Horner," Vol. II., p 113.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, June 9, 1812.

I had not the means of writing to you yesterday from the House, to apprise you of the first change of scene in this very lively farce. What it was that disconcerted Moira's, or rather Sheridan's plan, I know not; for to a late hour yesterday, it was all going on, and what is curious (but certain), Canning, in the course of yesterday, solicited both Liverpool and Vansittart to take office in this new government.

Whitbread has been, for the last two or three days, in constant communication with Moira; and the general idea is, that he was to take office, and to lead the House of Commons—not extremely disposed, I believe, to be so led. But how this was to be reconciled with his declaration, at Ponsonby's meeting, that he never would act with Canning, I cannot undertake to say.

I have no doubt but that both Moira and Sheridan have been dupes to the Prince Regent, or rather to Eldon; and that the present denouement is what was from the first intended.

People reason variously about the probabilities of Thursday. My own guess is, that the Ministers will have a majority; as both Whitbread and Sheridan, as also Canning, will all declare *against* our demand of the Household; and will, consequently give a loop-hole for country gentlemen and rats to vote against the motion, even if they themselves should vote for it; which Sheridan probably will not do, nor, perhaps, the others.

If my conjecture is right, I shall be released in three days, to my infinite joy; and the pleasure of receiving you at Dropmore will only be postponed for a very short period.

But in such times, no man can answer for anything twelve hours together.

I own I am a little sorry that Moira's government was not tried. It would have been a grand spectacle.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Friday night, half-past 12.

My dearest Brother,

I have just left Camelford House, and do most heartily congratulate you on the intelligence that the dangers and responsibility of the present moment will continue in the present hands.

Adam has just announced to my brother the Prince's desire to see him and Lord Grey, on Sunday morning; and has *privately* communicated to them, by the Prince's desire, his intention of continuing the present Ministers; although it is too late, we hear, to pursue you with this happy communication to-night, I leave it as I go to bed, with orders for its being left with you at an early hour to-morrow. The terms of the message, and the appointment for Sunday, are all as gracious as possible, and filled with expressions of kindness. It is received by Lord Grenville as final, but must not be indiscreetly mentioned till after the formal audience on Sunday. Rejoice with me, my dearest brother, at this providential escape.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, June 10.

Dearest Brother,

Although Morpeth does not consider the Canningites as desperate for Thursday, yet I confess I have very little reliance on our supposed superiority of numbers. I know that M. A. Taylor doubts if he can vote, though he was with us in the last address. Tremaine is quoted as being to vote against us; and the Burdettites are expected either to be absent, or to be against us; but what I regard as the worst feature of the whole, is to find that there is no *esprit de corps* upon the subject of this exertion of royal authority in the face of the Address of Parliament, and that this great constitutional question has sunk away from the estimation of the House, and will add another instance to the indignities which during the last four years have so unremittingly been heaped upon the House, by their scandalous dereliction of all their constitutional powers, authorities, and privileges.

General Maitland is come to town, and gives, as I hear, a very unfavourable picture of the state of things in his military district; and the report is revived of American war being commenced by their having sent out the few frigates they have, to strike at some of our convoys. I do not find that this is authenticated, but it is more believed than it was. At Lord Liverpool's meeting of Parliamentary friends, it was intimated that a mere motion to consider of the Catholic Laws would not be resisted by the new old government. I suppose this is meant to catch Canning, of whose assistance they certainly entertain great hopes; though Morpeth, in judging from G. Leveson's language, does not entertain that belief as much as the public does.

Still I am persuaded that we shall be beat on Thursday, in which case Lord Grenville will go to Dropmore on Friday, where I trust I shall very soon find you and him.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, June 10, 1812.

I have nothing new to tell you to-day. There seems great reason to suppose that Wortley will be beat to-morrow. But whether his motion shall be carried or not, I feel very confident the result will be an union between the present Ministers and Canning, but probably to the exclusion of Wellesley, who stands too ill with these men to allow of their wishing or his consenting to, an union.

I hope to leave town on Friday. I shall probably stay for the Levee on that day, and go down to Dropmore in the evening. I have little doubt that the cry of the House of Commons will be in favour of the Prince Regent's right to name his own Household; a point which the King has thus been able to establish for his son, though he could never carry it for himself.

I greatly rejoice in the escape I have had. Such a Court, and such a Parliament, in such a state of the country, are too much for any men to contend with. Had the thing been fairly offered, I must have tried it, but I believe things must prove still worse (as they are rapidly doing) before either the Prince Regent or the public will feel its real situation; and it may then be too late.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

House of Commons, 5 o'clock, June 10.

There is nothing new, excepting Lord Sidmouth is Home Secretary, vice Ryder, and Lord Bathurst, War Secretary, vice Liverpool, and Lord Harrowby, President of Council.

Our numbers for to-morrow promise well, as to our friends, and if they cannot bring more than two hundred, we shall beat them; but they are moving heaven and earth, and a great impression has been made by the rejection of the Household.

Lord Moira has actually taken the blue ribband, but I know he said to-day the Government could not stand.

I have just seen Wortley's motion for to-morrow, which is the most milk and water thing that can be, and which, in my opinion, ought to be seconded by Lord Castlereagh. It regrets that his Royal Highness's endeavours to comply with the wishes of the House in forming a strong Government, have not been crowned with success, and it hopes that he will lose no opportunity in endeavouring to add to the strength of the present. This, however, as to the motion, is immaterial—it is a trial of the strength of the new-formed Administration, and as such, will decide their fate, whether it is couched in one form or another.

W. H. F.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, June 11, 1812.

There seems no doubt of our being happily in a minority again to-night. We have just (to my great satisfaction) decided to resist Wortley's motion; and when that is disposed of, to move an address of our own, in which we shall, of course, be beat.

I, therefore, go out of town to-morrow evening after I have, as is proper, made my dutiful acknowledgment at the Levee, for the signal marks of confidence and favour with which we have been honoured on this occasion.

Lord Moira wants to have another discussion in the House of Lords, sensible, I believe, that the Prince Regent did not come off best in the last set-to. I have desired him to fix either Wednesday or Thursday for it; probably he will take Thursday, that the Cabinet may have its dinner on Wednesday. I shall only go up for that day, and Tom and Lord Grey will remain with you at Dropmore, where, in consequence of Temple's letter to him, we shall expect you on Monday.

Nothing new stirring to-day. Sidmouth is Secretary of State for the Home Department, as best qualified to conciliate the Catholics. Lord Bathurst and Castlereagh the other two. The former probably only a stop-gap for Canning. But his two colleagues do not seem very attractive.

It is necessary to return for a short time to Peninsular affairs, which were daily assuming greater importance. The strong places, Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, had fallen into the hands of the British Commander, who had made all his preparations for an advance into Spain by the 13th of June, and it was fully expected that no very long time would elapse before he would come into collision with the powerful force under Marmont. The two commanders met, and a trial of generalship of the most remarkable character ever exhibited in the great game of war, was protracted for several days. For the details and the result, the reader is referred to the secret despatch that follows the communications of the two admirals.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

May 25.

My dear Lord,

I wrote to you yesterday by the packet, but Wellesley's despatches did not arrive until this morning, and I have sent the 'Phœnix' off with them. Soult has escaped from the British with the loss of cannon, baggage, military chest, and ammunition; so that he will fall an easy prey to Silveira, and the Portuguese army, who Wellesley met in his chace at Montalegre, and as they were fresh and in good order, left him to pursue the scattered French, and returned with the British to Oporto, in his way to the Tagus, to oppose Victor. The peasants are killing the French in detail, and some thousands of prisoners have been brought in.

The weather has been very bad, and Soult is now experiencing what poor Moore did. Tell Lord Braybrooke no officer is returned wounded of the 14th, since poor Hawley; therefore, he may be certain Neville is safe. Our little Harvey is very well. The Guards were the last engaged with the enemy, and behaved uncommonly well.

God bless you, my dear Lord,

I remain, ever yours, most affectionately,

G. Berkeley.

ADMIRAL FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Off Ferrol, June 23.

My Lord,

I believe I told you in my last, that three hundred Chasseurs were on their march from Malaga to Ferrol, to complete the French ships, since which eight Chasse Marées are arrived at

Seideira, a very small port, four or five leagues to the north-east of Ferrol, laden with naval stores. These have been sent overland to Ferrol, and a great part is canvas, if report says true. The French officers will sell their stores to any body that will buy them. I observe, that since Mr. Le Brun has been here, the French captains at Corunna are much more on their guard than they were two months ago; they are not so fond of being in the same society with us, and as one of the captains told me, that Le Brun had remarked to him, that however it might be requisite in point of good manners to converse in mixed society with us, the quarrel between the two nations was such as almost to make it personal between every individual. Whether this was meant as a hint to them I can't say, but they have certainly altered in their deportment since. The captain of the Dutch ship called on me on shore; I was not within, but have conversed with him; he is a good honest Dutchman, and would, I believe, be much better satisfied to serve with our squadron than the French. Admiral Cornwallis writes to Cochrane, that the ships here are not to be relieved for some time. I confess I believe we are just as well here as elsewhere, whilst the fine weather continues; but if we are not caulked, and the hull repaired before winter, the ship will founder—the leak in the bows continues as before we went into dock, and the whole of the head was washed away in December. If you are anxious to have young Parker join immediately, Admiral Young will find him a conveyance, I dare say. I received a letter from Mrs. Salter, about her son. I fancy Proby got rid of him because he was a little riotous—in three days he was completely master of the youngsters' mess here, but by being steady with him, he now conforms like the rest, and will, I dare say, do very well.

My ship, as far as rigging and real service, is very well off, and I have, hitherto, avoided any sort of representation about the hull. I dread going into dock. I shall be obliged to report before winter. Eliab Harvey, I find, goes back to Rochefort, to the no small annoyance of Sir Robert Calder. Jervis is to come here again, he tells me. I read in the papers so much of what is going on in England, that every arrival becomes highly interesting.

I beg to be remembered to your Lordship's family, and remain ever, with great truth,

Your Lordship's most sincere,
And faithful humble servant,
T. H. FREMANTLE.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHM.

T—n, August 24, 1812.

Ministers have taken more than the ordinary licence, upon such occasions, with Lord Wellington's late dispatches relative to the glorious victory over Marmont. Had the originals transpired, they would have fully confirmed the truth of what I have already stated to your Lordship; namely, that Lord Wellington must retrograde in consequence of his want of money. In point of fact, on or about the tenth of July last, his military chest did not contain 20,000 dollars. Indeed, so hopeless was Lord Wellington himself of his ability of even maintaining himself at Salamanca, that he totally destroyed those forts which had cost him a regular investment, and many brave men, lest they should again form the strength of the enemy on their falling into his hands.

The two armies had remained looking at each other for nearly a fortnight, on the opposite banks of the river, when Lord Wellington found that he must fall back. During this interval, the soldiers of both sides bathed together, and frequently swam over, and interchanged civilities with each other. *Lord Wellington began to move* on the 15th and 16th of July, and was followed closely by Marmont over the Douro, on those days. On the 17th, Lord Wellington approached the Tormes, nearer by about six miles; and took up a strong position. He halted, the 18th, when Marmont made a masterly movement to turn our right; but was most gallantly repelled by the cavalry under Cotton. On the 19th, 20th, and 21st, still retreated on an average ten miles a day, and as closely pursued; although, at the same time, with an extreme of caution and generalship on the part of the enemy, quite admirable. On the first of those days, after our army had marched, Lord Wellington made a *reconnoissance,* with a very small escort, and his personal staff, when two squadrons of French hussars pushed for him, and chased him full ten miles, as hard as his horse could gallop! nor did he escape without the greatest difficulty. On the night of the 21st, his position at once covered Salamanca, and the great road to Ciudad Rodrigo.

The despatches have given sufficiently accurate details of the battle of the 22nd. But it may not be known to your Lordship, that at two on the afternoon of that day, Lord Wellington was just on the point of again marching to his rear, and abandoning Salamanca, when the ill star of Marmont induced the latter, in his eagerness to out-flank us, to weaken his centre, and gave the possibility of attacking him with advantage. The anxiety of Lord Wellington, between this moment and half-past four, was terrible. Just at the half hour, as nearly as possible, he halted (for the armies were manœuvring full two hours and a half, marching in parallel directions, and for the most part, so close that the French word of command was as plainly heard as our own), fronted, and moved forward. At five, the enemy felt the British bayonets, and in half an hour their left was annihilated. For the first time since we have interfered in the

Peninsula, the French, on this occasion, were beaten out of their tactics. They fled without order in every direction, throwing away their arms, &c.; and had not the darkest night perhaps that ever was known, covered their flight, they must all have been taken or destroyed.

In the admirable charges made by the British cavalry, Lord Wellington was always among the first; and Lord Clinton describes him as having been several times in the greatest danger; he was hit twice, and blood drawn from the right thigh by a shot which carried away one of his holsters. Of Marmont's fate, nothing is certainly known. Lord Clinton saw the bed covered with blood, where his arm was amputated, very high up near the shoulder. All the French accounts say he has since died of his wounds, some at one place, some at another. The Portuguese, however, say that he got to Burgos, and was still alive, proceeding to France in a litter. He has also a bad wound, but of what description I have not heard.

All accounts, agree in saying, that the charge made by General Bock with his heavy Germans, on the morning of the 23rd, was the finest sight ever seen. It was on the French rear-guard, consisting of nearly three thousand men, one thousand of which were cavalry, all strongly posted. The French cavalry fled on the first onset; but the infantry formed into squares upon commanding situations; but were instantly strewed upon the ground under our horses' feet, and all who were not sabred were made prisoners.

General Bock had not quite eight hundred men in this gallant affair, and it should seem that it has afforded the ostensible cause for giving the German troops permanent rank in our army. Lord Wellington, in addition to his increase of honours, is to have the next Garter—to have £100,000 in money, and to have the present pension attached for ever to the title. So Lords Liverpool and Bathurst, on casually meeting Lord Wellesley out riding on Friday last, informed him was the intention of Government.

It would be difficult to give your Lordship an idea of the despondence and grief of every rank in our army, during the painful, but I suppose, necessary retreat of our army. Even Lord Wellington lost his usual flow of spirits. He describes Marmont's movements as the most masterly that could be conceived. In his position, on the right bank of the Douro, he could not be attacked; and for six successive days of almost constant manœuvring, he never made the slightest mistake, or exposed himself to be attacked, without our being subjected to the certainty of being beaten. Indeed, he seems to have had a perfect consciousness of his own powers, for so sure was he of his game, that on the night of the 21st, in general orders, Salamanca and its dependent suburbs and villages were distributed into quarters for his army, for the following night, and I have actually seen (found in the pockets of the killed) short billets of such appropriation, directed to officers commanding battalions, &c.

Providentially, however, his judgment failed him in the critical moment. He seems to have been puzzled between his wish of getting between us and Salamanca, and at the same time to get possession, if possible, of the high road to Portugal, by Ciudad Rodrigo. For this purpose, while he kept marching to outflank our right, he kept *his* right stationary, and thus a perilous chasm was left in the centre, which Lord Wellington, with the true spirit of military science, and with the finest *coup-d'œil,* instantly penetrated. Perhaps, too, he lost himself in the elevation of seeing us retire before him day after day for nearly a week, and never calculated upon our turning upon him.

When Lord Wellington saw his time, the words he uttered were, "Now, by G—, I shall hit him." And hit him he did, in every sense! Marmont had 45,000 men in the field.

What our force was, I cannot at present exactly tell, but certainly not so many by seven or eight thousand.

But, notwithstanding, it has pleased God that instead of a retreat into Portugal, with all the effects of disgrace and discomfiture, we have gained ground and a glorious victory. Still it will be impossible for Lord Wellington to do more than maintain himself at Valladolid and Cuellar; and he will have another general action to fight before he can thoroughly break the army of the north, strengthened as it will now be, by Suchet and Joseph. Lord Wellington does not hesitate charging this unpromising aspect of things, not only upon the ill-judged economy of Ministers, who have crippled him, but also upon the failure of the expedition to Catalonia, which your Lordship will hear with indignation and surprise, has actually been stopped by orders from the present wretched ministers. It is true, they have, since things have taken the present turn, ordered it to go on again—but the moment—even the season for efficient co-operation has been wantonly thrown away; and instead of affording the means of turning the glorious victory of Salamanca to the actual and immediate expulsion of the French, it can now answer no other end than that of a simple reinforcement, while, in the meantime, your Lordship will find that Suchet will cut up those troops in Catalonia and Valencia, which were organizing in expectation of the English armament. A determination to depart at any rate, and upon every occasion, from Lord Wellesley's policy, seems to be the only cause which can be assigned for this extraordinary conduct of Government. In the same spirit of folly, they have suffered America to get the start of us—have allowed themselves to be check-mated by Denmark—have caused the delay of Bernadotte's expedition, which may now never take place, and, in fine, have done all that they could, both at home and abroad, to ruin the common cause, and run the risk of losing the greatest game ever played by contending nations. When all this is brought before the country, *as it assuredly will,* I cannot think that it is their projected taxes upon English capital, and Irish property, that can save them.

Notwithstanding all that Lord Wellington had done and said for Spain, he was quite as much at the mercy of Spanish incapacity and presumption, when in possession of their capital in August, 1812, as when anxious to advance to their assistance from Portugal almost at the commencement of the war. His letter, addressed to Sir Henry Wellesley, dated the 23rd of that month, contains more than the usual amount of complaint and abuse of Spanish officers, civil and military—evidently not without ample provocation. He asks, "What can be done for this lost nation? As for raising men or supplies, or taking any one measure to enable them to carry on the war, *that is out of the question.* Indeed, there is nobody to excite them to exertion, or to take advantage of the enthusiasm of the people, or of their enmity against the French. Even the Guerillas are getting quietly into large towns, and amusing themselves, or collecting plunder of a better and more valuable description, and nobody looks forward to the exertions to be made, whether to secure or improve our advantage."

He continues: "This is a faithful picture of the state of affairs; and though I still hope to be able to maintain our position in Castille, and even to improve our advantages, I shudder when I reflect upon the enormity of the task which I have undertaken, with inadequate powers myself to do anything, and without assistance of any kind from the Spaniards, or, I may say, from any individual of the Spanish nation."[1]

This is strong language, but it is the language of fearless truth, which this truly illustrious man never hesitated to speak or write. We should like to reprint the whole of this letter, as the best reply that could be given to the attacks that have been made upon the Grenvilles for the opinions they expressed upon the war; but the reader, who has not the valuable labours of Colonel Gurwood to refer to, must be satisfied with a few more sentences: "If for any cause," he asks, as though about to echo the sentiments of Lord Grenville, "I should be overpowered, or should be obliged to retire, what will the world say? What will the people of England say? What will those in Spain say? That we had made a great effort, attended by some glorious circumstances; and that from January 1812, we had gained more advantages for the cause, and had acquired more extent of territory by our operations, than had ever been gained by any army in the same period of time, against so powerful an enemy; but that, being unaided by the Spanish officers and troops—not from disinclination, but from inability, on account of the gross ignorance of the former, and the want of discipline of the latter, and from the inefficiency of all the persons selected by the Government for great employment, *we were at last overpowered, and compelled to withdraw within our frontier*."

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[1] "Despatches," Vol. IX., p. 374.

"What will be Lord Castlereagh's reply to the next proposition for peace?" he then asks. "Not that we will not treat, if the government of Joseph is to be the guaranteed government, but he will be too happy to avail himself of any opportunity of withdrawing with honour from a contest in which it will be manifest that, owing to the inability of those employed to carry it on, on the part of the Spaniards, *there is no prospect of military success.* Thus, this great cause will be lost, and this nation will be enslaved for the want of men at their head capable of conducting them."[1]

It is evident that our great Commander looked to Lord Castlereagh in this emergency, with more anxiety than hope. He appears to be striving to reconcile himself to some diplomatic compromise, that would save the honour of the English army, and the credit of the English government. Happily for both, equally so for the fame of Lord Wellington, the Minister's resources were more than sufficient to meet the difficulties of the situation—almost desperate as they seemed. His capacity for the most onerous, the most exacting official employment, was displayed throughout the war, in a manner that must always maintain his name in the front rank of eminent British Statesmen, notwithstanding the misrepresentations and prejudiced statements of political opponents. There can be no difficulty whatever in proving, that if the military glory of terminating with complete success this arduous contest with the most powerful and warlike nation in

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[1] "Despatches," Vol. IX., p. 375.

Europe, is due to this able General; the ministerial fame of assisting and directing him with the necessary material and counsel, is equally due to the able Minister.

What was accomplished in the first campaign, under his auspices, as narrated by Sir Henry Wellesley, in a despatch to Lord Castlereagh, three days later than that of Lord Wellington just quoted, was a happy presage of what was to follow.

"I beg to offer to your Lordship my congratulations upon the raising of the siege of Cadiz, an event, perhaps, the most important of this extraordinary campaign. I do not believe that our military annals afford an example of a campaign, the circumstances of which are more creditable to our arms, or attended with more substantial advantages: two fortresses and two fortified posts taken, almost in the presence of two French armies, each of which equalled in strength that of the Allies; one of these armies defeated in a pitched battle, with the loss of half its numbers; the enemy driven from the interior provinces; the capital recovered, and the siege of this important post raised, which will, I expect, be followed by the complete evacuation of Andalusia; and all this achieved in a campaign of about five months' duration."[1]

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[1] "Letters and Despatches of Viscount Castlereagh," Vol. VIII., p. 272.

CHAPTER XV.

[1812.]

LORD LIVERPOOL'S NEGOCIATIONS WITH MR. CANNING—RECONCILIATION OF VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH AND MR. CANNING—THE LEADERSHIP OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—INCIVILITY OF MINISTERS TO MARQUIS WELLESLEY—RECONCILIATION OF LORD SIDMOUTH AND MR. CANNING—THE WELLESLEY AND CANNING PARTY—POSITION OF LORD WELLESLEY—HIS DESIRE TO SERVE UNDER LORD GRENVILLE—MADNESS OF THE QUEEN OF NAPLES—MORE SECRET HISTORY—HOSTILITY OF MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO THE GOVERNMENT—LORD WELLINGTON'S PRIVATE COMMUNICATION TO HIM, AND HIS REPLY—NAPOLEON IN RUSSIA—SURRENDER OF INCOME BY THE JOINT TELLERS OF THE EXCHEQUER—LORD WELLESLEY ATTACKS THE GOVERNMENT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS—THE PRINCESS OF WALES AND THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE—DESTRUCTION OF THE FRENCH ARMY ON ITS RETREAT FROM MOSCOW—BRIBES OFFERED TO ENGLAND.

CHAPTER XV.

SOMETHING more remains to be told respecting the "strange eventful history" of the Liverpool Administration; but we leave it to a well-qualified pen. There is, however, one remark that, cannot in justice be avoided here. The interview so graphically narrated in the next letter, there is no doubt took place, very much in the manner it is described. That Lord Castlereagh should insist upon retaining the leadership of the House of Commons was a matter of course—the position was due to him on account of the ability, as a Minister, he had displayed in official situations of great difficulty and responsibility—he possessed it before Mr. Canning's co-operation was sought, and, in the first opening of the negociation, his retaining it was mentioned as a condition. Mr. Canning, it is evident, was ambitious of its pre-eminence and its patronage. It is natural, therefore, that Lord Castlereagh should have firmly withstood this attempt to dispossess him of his well-earned honours, made by one from whose jealousy he had already greatly suffered. But he is not only blameless here. The conviction is expressed in a subsequent portion of the Correspondence, that the entire negociation was a sham. This would imply that Lord Castlereagh lent himself to the deception—an inference totally at variance with his sense of honour, possessing, besides, the glaring improbability that he would copy that crooked course of policy he had indignantly denounced.

—— TO EARL TEMPLE.

T—n, Sept. 2, 1812.

My Lord,

In this letter, I propose to detail to your Lordship the steps taken by Government (whether with views real or pretended) to connect Lord Wellesley and Canning with their administration, and the ostensible causes of their failure.

About a week before the recess, Lord Liverpool sent for Mr. Canning, and told him that he had it in command from the Prince Regent, to say how much it would gratify his Royal Highness to see him (Canning) one of the members of his Government, as well from feelings of personal consideration, as from the conviction of its being highly beneficial to the public service. That these sentiments were perfectly in unison with his own (Liverpool's) and that he had sent for him to come to an understanding upon that subject before Parliament broke up. Canning here asked Liverpool if it were meant that the overtures thus made, were understood to extend to Lord Wellesley as to himself. To which Liverpool replied, "certainly." Canning then said, that Lord Wellesley and himself considered they were at liberty to act in conjunction with any man, or set of men, provided that they were not expected, in the slightest point, to depart from those principles of policy to which they held themselves inviolably bound, namely, the carrying on the war in the Peninsula with vigour, and the giving the Catholic Question a due consideration, in the approaching Session of Parliament. Lord Liverpool was willing that such should be the basis of the proposed negociation. Canning making no objection, it was then arranged, first, that a meeting should take place between Canning and Castlereagh: then, that a reconciliation, should take place and their respective pretensions, both in regard of office, and weight in administration, be equitably settled. Next, that overtures should be directly made to Lord Wellesley, and lastly, that as there was now scarcely any or no difference existing between the parties, respecting the war, that Lords Sidmouth and Wellesley should confer upon the Catholic Claims, and endeavour to frame such measures upon that head as would be acceptable to the moderate men of all parties. At parting, Lord Liverpool asked Canning if he thought Ireland, with a seat in the Cabinet for Mr. Pole, would be acceptable to Lord Wellesley: to which Canning could give no answer.

In two days after this, Canning and Castlereagh had the proposed meeting; which, apparently, was a very cordial one, shaking hands, mutual acknowledgments of heat—happiness at meeting—professions of regard—wish for renewal of connexion and great admiration of each others' talents, integrity, &c., were interchanged, Liverpool only being by; and they next proceeded to discuss their respective pretensions. It was first mooted that Canning should return to his old situation, at the Foreign Office; to which Castlereagh agreed, on its being expressly stipulated in writing that he was to continue to manage the House of Commons—a point which he would not, holding himself as the successor and representative of "the great and good Mr. Perceval," ever recede from. To this, Canning objected, that such a stipulation was a direct acknowledgment of inferiority, and that the insisting upon it at such a stage of the negociation, was dictated in a spirit of jealousy, it behoved him to be wary of; but that to show his wishes for the proposed union, he was willing to take the Secretariat upon a perfect footing of equality with Lord Castlereagh, and that their respective influence in the House of Commons should be left to find its own level, without any aid to either, save to that which their offices, their personal friends and attachments would naturally give them. This proposition Castlereagh positively rejected, repeating the same thing over and over again, of his pious regard to the memory of Mr. Perceval, &c., and the meeting broke up, *re infecta.*

In two or three days after this, Liverpool again sent for Canning, told him that the Prince was greatly disconcerted and vexed at the failure, and had desired him to see Canning again, adding (confidentially) that the Prince had said, "You must put a little more bait on the hook." In consequence of which he, Lord Liverpool, had no objection now to say, that if Lord L. Gower's coming into the Cabinet were an object to Mr. Canning, it should be effected. Canning said that it indubitably was a very great object, but that he could not allow of Lord Castlereagh's exclusive lead in the Commons. However, he was very willing, in order to mark the perfect equality between them more distinctly, to allow that the management of the House should be put into Bragge Bathurst's, or Vansittart's hands, and thus terminate all rivalry upon the subject. It took another day, to get Castlereagh's decision upon this latter proposition, but it met with the same fate as the former. Castlereagh coldly and obstinately maintaining his point. At length, Canning, seeing nothing better could be done, on the very last day of the Session, but at a late hour of it, made an offer, to leave Castlereagh in this so much-prized management, provided that he Canning should be the organ through which all communications should be made to the House of Commons from the Throne; in other words, to be considered the leading *Secretary of State*, in that chamber of Parliament. This proposition, apparently so moderate, was again negatived by the inflexible Castlereagh, and the Session closed, without, indeed, seeing the hands of Government strengthened, but leaving them masters of the field, and Ministers of the country—at least till Parliament should meet again.

—— TO EARL TEMPLE.

T—n, Sept. 4, 1812.

My Lord,

In my letter of yesterday, I have been particular in marking the dates of the various overtures which were made, as they bear on the period of the recess; for scarcely had that event taken place, or at least a very short time afterwards, when Canning, Lord Wellesley, and their respective friends, became fully persuaded that the whole proceeding was bottomed in knavery and deceit, on the part both of the Prince and the Government, and was solely intended to cajole Lord Wellesley, and to prevent his making his so often-threatened speech upon the causes of his retiring from office, and, consequently, the exposition of the weak and vacillating policy of Ministers, which it has become well understood, he meant to deliver during the last days of the Session. It is true that the intercourse between Lord Liverpool and Canning continued with great civility for a fortnight or longer after that event, but with a gradual diminution of ardour on the part of the Premier; and, at length, terminated rather abruptly, upon Canning's casually asking what would be the course of proceeding were he (Canning) to assent *in toto* to Lord Liverpool's proposition for a junction? To which the latter replied it would then be his duty to a set of men who had so firmly stood by him, to submit it to them, and make it a Cabinet Question. Neither eagerness for office, nor credulity itself could submit to be further imposed upon; for it was rather too gross to affect a belief that any four of a Cabinet, so composed as the present, would deliberately vote themselves out, for the purpose of introducing others to their situations; men, too, whom they professed to hate, and whom they are known to fear.

Be all this as it will, the stratagem had the desired effect. Lord Wellesley, always averse, as well from speaking as from the necessary preparation for it, was too happy to evade it, on very slight suggestions of his personal friends, that it would be injudicious so to do; and thus a second opportunity was lost of arraying the whole judgment of the United Kingdom, in opposition to the present men, and of redeeming the pledge he had certainly given (to his adherents, at least) of at once revenging himself, and exposing them. Of his means of doing this, in a degree far more ample than any one not most intimately versed in what has been going on these last two years, would credit, your Lordship may be assured. Happily, the moment for doing so, although postponed, is not abandoned. Nor will what I have just stated to your Lordship, serve to blunt the edge or point of the powerful weapons he means to wield against them.

Your Lordship will have observed that no direct propositions whatever were made to Lord Wellesley: that he has had no intercourse with these people during this negociation, nor since that, period the slightest. On the contrary, on every possible occasion, they have marked their incivility towards him, by every means in their power. So far from letting him see Lord Wellington's despatches, they have not transmitted him even the ordinary official bulletins.

But the comical part of all this is, that their antipathy extends to their quondam humble servant, but late apostate from the Intolerants, W. Pole, who has his full share of their abhorrence and contempt. The first intimation he had of his successor in office, was through the newspapers; nor, although he continued to do business with Lords Liverpool, Sidmouth, and Castlereagh, to the last moment, did one of them ever allude to his quitting Ireland, or ask his advice, or pay him any compliment whatever. From Peel still less; for he announced his succession to the Secretaryship, by going down to the Irish Office, with his clerks, and taking possession of it, without further ceremony. What is yet thoroughly unaccountable, is that Pole received a letter bearing date, the fifth of July, and delivered in due course from the Duke of Richmond, expressing his Grace's wish that he who was on the spot, would let him know who and what was the new Secretary; and in other respects a civil letter, which pleased Pole very much—when, lo! a few minutes after reading it, he read Mr. Peel's appointment, in the 'Dublin Gazette' of the fourth!

When I speak of no intercourse, &c., I mean to be understood as not including Lord Sidmouth. It had been originally understood that Lords Sidmouth, Buckinghamshire, B. Bathurst, and Vansittart, had signed the round robins against Lord Wellesley—put out by his late colleagues. Lord Sidmouth, as soon as he understood that such was the impression on Lord Wellesley's mind, called upon him, and assured him that it was entirely a misconception, and contrary to the truth, either with respect to himself, Sidmouth, or any of those who came into office with him. This interview begot others; and a considerable intimacy exists at present. I am not certain whether Lord Sidmouth speaks fully upon state affairs in general, but certainly he does of those of his own office, of which more in my next. In the course of one of these interviews, Lord Sidmouth said, that he had a great wish to be reconciled to Canning; that, having conceived himself treated by that gentleman with a very unbecoming levity, almost amounting to insolence, he was determined not to come into office with him; but, having achieved that step by himself, all resentment in his mind had ceased, and he wished much that Lord Wellesley would bring about a meeting. This meeting accordingly took place, and great cordiality exists between these three personages at present. What may grow out of it, I cannot divine; but I certainly do not believe there is, just now at least, any view to political connexion.

——— TO EARL TEMPLE.

Sept. 6, 1812.

The immediate consequence of the rupture of the negociations to which the preceding letters refer, was the formation of the strictest political union between Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, attended with all the formality of stipulations, and witnessed by the leading friends of both. The leading features of this treaty were, first, that neither of the principals should take office, without a fair offer being made to the other; next, that each should use his utmost efforts to exercise his parliamentary influence for the purpose of raising the standard of a distinct political party, by the opening of the next Session; and lastly, that they should, in the *interim,* not enter into any union or connexion whatever, with Opposition, as such, nor, indeed, till the strength of all parties showed itself in Parliament at the next meeting. These were cemented and bound together by the strongest pledges, and the positive determination never to swerve, in the minutest degree, from any principle which either had held out in this last Session, as his public policy.

Considering, from the above premises, the existence of such a party in the country, its present strength is puny indeed, Canning bringing twelve, and Lord Wellesley eleven voices in the Commons to its composition; of the latter number Wellesley Pole influences five. But the leaders of it are sanguine in the expectation that they will be joined by many, when it is known that they are acting as a body of all parties; particularly, as Canning says, if they have between this and the meeting of Parliament, a few slices of national calamity to help them out. Hitherto, however, I cannot learn that they have filled their ranks with deserters either from Government or the Opposition. Mr. Ward is an exception of the latter class. He has avowed his determination of acting, in future, with Lord Wellesley, alleging, as his excuse, that his mind was weary in endeavouring to support the extremes of human opinion; for such were, upon almost all points, those of Lord Grenville and Mr. Whitbread. The latter has been tampered with, although at a distance, but quite unsuccessfully.

Having now given a thorough view of the political situation of Lord Wellesley, and of his far more active and enterprising coadjutor, your Lordship will thence be far more able than I can pretend to be, to decide to what it will lead. But I always wish it to be impressed upon your mind, that Ireland, under Lord Grenville, would be the nearest object to his heart, and to the wishes of his *best* friends; and this for many reasons. First, as with respect to pecuniary matters, such a situation is absolutely necessary to his very existence. He cannot now raise a shilling; and one year more at Apsley House, is the utmost to which his means can by any possible contrivance extend. After that (and no office), passports and Sicily. Next, to carry freedom thither to the Catholics. The dominion of a whole country; the magnificence he could exercise; and, above all, the indolence in which he might indulge, would, combined and multiplied into each other, be infinitely more gratifying to him, than a scantily paid premiership, and a conflicting cabinet. Your Lordship may think this opinion controverted by recent transactions, and that he took the premiership unhesitatingly, at the total expence of all that I have stated as just objects of his preference. I will not now detain your Lordship by proofs in support of my opinion, but content myself with stating that, had Lord Grey allowed him to come within his guard, and not have confined him to the strictness of diplomacy in the pending negociation between them, although Lord Wellesley went to him, as first Minister, he was as ready to lay it down for general accommodation, as he had been, *pro hac vice,* to take it up. This fact, I protest, solemnly, is within my own knowledge, and I could verify it, were there a necessity.

I do not say that there are not among his nearest connexions, those who, were the offer made to him, would insist upon his being Minister, were it again offered to him. Such, for example, as Wellesley Pole, Culling Smith, and some others of this class and stamp; and for reasons purely selfish. But those with whom Lord Wellesley spends his whole time, who are domesticated with him, and have by far the greatest influence over him, such as Sydenham, Colonel Shawe, Forbes, &c., who know well the horrors of a total want of money and credit to such a man as Lord Wellesley, and who bear the whole unpleasantness of it, would infinitely prefer Ireland, or even India again, to barren and penniless Cabinet situation —besides, Irish or Indian patronage could satisfy their objects, though not those of the first mentioned class. This latter detest Canning, for his selfish knavery, to which Lord Wellesley has been sacrificed more than once. By their views and advice, Lord Wellesley, your Lordship may be assured, will ultimately be governed. For my own part, as far as I could take the liberty of suggesting in person, I made Lord Grenville acquainted with the above; and had your Lordship been in town, very different results would have taken place.

The ministerial measures, for some time after the construction of the Government, appear to have been anything but reassuring. Mr. Thomas Grenville, writing on the 4th of September, says:

RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Elton, Sunday, 4 Sept.

My dearest Brother.

I have not a word of news, except that I heard yesterday, from Lord Glastonbury, who does not complain of himself, though he does not appear sanguine as to the state of the public; his fears are, naturally enough, more pointed to Ireland than to England; I say more naturally, because that has been likewise the bug-bear of my politics, but, in truth, the weak shifting and unaccountable course pursued by our Ministers, creates danger where none should be found.

It is evident from the following, that if her Majesty of the Two Sicilies was not insane, she deserved to be so considered. Other accounts, however, prove that there was too much method in her madness, and her policy was deranged rather than her brain.

ADMIRAL FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Palermo, September 12.

My dear Lord,

Since the departure of Lord William Bentinck, nothing material has occurred, except some orders given by General Maitland, which, I understand, are not approved of by the Court. All accounts seem to agree that the Queen is at times deranged—it is said that on reading the orders she was so exasperated, that she tore the clothes off the back of her attendant. One of the Barons—Villafranca—has, I understand, made his peace (through the women) with the Queen, and is to be released from his imprisonment; this has caused some sensation among the Sicilian Barons, and I should not be surprised if he was neglected by his friends, on his return to Palermo.

This letter will go by the 'Canopus,' whose people have near six years pay due to them. I should think Sir Edward Pellew will send some more ships here during the winter. I have, at present, very little occupation, and am living on shore. The intrigue and villainy of this place is hardly to be described. The Queen has twice sent to desire I would go to her, but as I am well assured no advantage can be gained by it, and that it would occasion distrust among those I am acting with, as to the Sicilian Barons, I have carefully avoided having anything to say to her.

Should we be drove to the necessity of using force in order to change the system, there can be little doubt as to the event. I feel quite confident the Neapolitan troops will not face ours, and I am of opinion that if terms were offered, they would join us—a squadron in the Bay would alarm them, and give the Sicilians confidence, as well as protection—but I am quite sure this can be brought about without bloodshed, because the Queen seems determined, and will, at least, vent her spleen upon those who are considered most attached to our Government.

I send you the copy of a return of our army here and in the Ionian Islands. You may depend on the correctness of it.

T. F. F.

It is very questionable from the remarkable statement about to be published, that, numerous as had been the acts in the political comedy that had been in course of performance from the commencement of the Regency, there was still room for more. Indeed, it might be taken for a dramatic version of "the Story without an End." One of the principal *dramatis personæ* had now to come forward in a manner that may almost be said to have invested him with a new character. His "part" contains the most curious revelations to be found in this apparently inexhaustible "Cabinet opened." The whole of the dialogue is well worthy of careful perusal.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Thursday, Nov. 12, 1812.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have had much conversation to-day with D——. I must premise by saying, that I carefully avoided giving him the least intimation of my being acquainted with any part of the circumstances of which you informed me, neither do I think that he is aware of them himself. He saw Lord Wellesley about twelve days ago, who complained to him of Canning's conduct, of his speeches, and his toasts (one of which, however, the health of the King's Ministers, is denied) that he, Wellesley, never could so identify himself with Mr. Pitt, in whose system of politics he had seen several things that he could not approve of, and that he had written to Canning to that effect; that Canning's head was turned by his success at Liverpool, and that it was likely he was obliged to suit his election politics, by talking a stonger Pitt language than he would abide by. He said, "did you ever tell your friends that Canning and I differed vitally upon one point in the late negociations?" and then he explained it to be that Canning was inclined to agree to form the Government with such of the Opposition as they could get to join them, but declared himself ready to form it to their exclusion if they would not agree to his terms; thereby following Mr. Pitt's precedent, at the end of Addington's Government: and, whereas, he, Wellesley, declared that he would not agree to any government formed to exclude any individual, thereby following Lord Grenville's example, at the same period, which he thought was the right one to follow. He added, "The result of all this may be, that Canning will join the Government and I the Opposition, for nothing shall induce me to form a government upon the old principle of exclusion. I should consider myself as degraded if I acted *under Lord Liverpool*, I would not act *under Canning*, but I would act *under Lord Grenville*, and my wish is to take Ireland under his Government."

I made D—— cautiously repeat the words, and gave him notice I should report them.

Lord Wellesley then asked him whether he thought any disposition existed in the quarter of the Grenvilles, to enter into amicable discussions. D—— said there certainly was individually, a strong desire to see a co-operation, if it were practicable, but that it was impossible for him to say more upon that subject, as he knew no more.

You must now fit this on to what you told me, as well as you can. I pressed D—— to fix the date of this conversation, he said it was between twelve and fourteen days ago. Now, was the communication which you mentioned, a *joint one*, or only from Lord Wellesley? Or was it made, as the result of the letters which Wellesley said he had written to Canning, in consequence of his speeches and toasts? Lord Wellesley stated that seventeen members, whom he named, and whose names I am to have, had pledged themselves formally to him (Wellesley), that Canning counted upon from twelve to fifteen more, but as Canning was out of town, he could not give the names. He declared, repeatedly, his decided hostility to the Government, his determination to look to but one object, that of their overthrow, and to follow them up upon every point of their policy from the first day of the Session to the last, and he is making speeches, and practising before the glass accordingly.

Henry Wellesley, Sydenham, Shawe, and Culling Smith, constitute the *Grenville* party in his little Senate. Wellesley Pole and *Lord Wellington* are anxious for him to coalesce with the present men. The latter has been induced, evidently by Castlereagh and Liverpool, to write to Lord Wellesley the strongest and a very angry letter to him upon this subject, to which Wellesley said he had written as strong and as angry a reply, peremptorily refusing to have anything to do with the present ministers.

Such are the details of my conversation with D——. I thought it advisable to let D—— say when he shall next see Lord Wellesley, that I was in town, that he had seen me, and that he found me individually very anxious to see the means afforded of co-operation between Lords Grenville and Wellesley; that this could only be brought about, if at all, by mutual accommodation and advances, and that we had felt during all the discussions between Lord Wellesley, Canning, and the Government—though very little, if any, points of difference in opinion existed between us—that neither Wellesley nor Canning had ever shown any inclination to let this agreement of opinion ripen into political connection; that it was impossible that advances could be made by one party only, but that, individually we should be very happy to see such mutual advances as could make discussion possible, or give a prospect of its being entered into with a reasonable chance of success. I probably shall hear more to-morrow, which I will inform you of. In the meanwhile, pray let me know what is going on on the other side.

I have just seen Count Nugent, who thinks Bonaparte will make his stand between Smolensk and Witepsk. That Bonaparte would have done better had he advanced no further than those places, as now after being obliged to retrograde from Moscow, which is no military position, it may not be so easy for him to maintain himself, as it would have been had he made no such advance, and suffered no such disgrace. He thinks another battle inevitable. Murat was on the right of Moscow, Bonaparte at Moscow, Victor coming up from Smolensk. Murat being overwhelmed, Bonaparte found his flank turned, and himself obliged to evacuate Moscow. I find that the tone about Spain is low. So said Nugent, and so reported D— from Lord Wellesley. Pray tell my wife that since I closed my letter to her, Lord Bathurst has sent to me to say that some doubts exist as to Harvey's being killed. That Government have no account of it, and that they cannot find any private account of it from any person arrived, or in any letter. At the same time, Colonel Fuller, of the Guards, called at Admiral Harvey's with the news and the particulars. This suspense is worse to his poor parents than the certainty of the worst. I have just heard, from the authority of Bannerman, the East India director, and one of the Secret Committee, that Nugent is to remain Commander-in-chief with all emoluments, and in the same relative position with Lord Moira as General Lake stood in with Lord Cornwallis.

P.S. Lord Buckinghamshire has been out of town.

CH. T.

The Joint Tellers of the Exchequer had come to the determination of surrendering a considerable portion of their emoluments, which, in consequence of the war, had, of late years, grown to an unexampled amount. The following letter, from the Marquis Camden, intimates such an understanding; and that which follows from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, shows that it was acted upon.

EARL CAMDEN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

North Cray Farm, Nov. 16, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,

Having been absent from hence on the day upon which your letter arrived, and my letters not having been sent after me, I did not receive your Lordship's letter till Saturday, when no post left the neighbourhood of Wilderness, and no letters leaving London on Sunday, I could not reply to you till this day, when I have an opportunity of sending to London. Before receipt of that letter, and before I took any decisive resolution upon it, I wished to converse with Lord Castlereagh (only committing myself) as to the temper of the House of Commons, and the manner in which the subject of your office would be met in Parliament, and any motion for Committee of Inquiry resisted, and I found him of opinion that with such a sacrifice, the question would stand extremely well. I came here for the purpose of communicating with him, and I am going to Mr. Long's from hence. I wish to see him before I write more fully to your Lordship, and I think we shall not subject ourselves to any inconvenience with respect to the time of the delivery of our letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for Parliament meets only for the purpose of formalities, on Tuesday. The Speech is not to be delivered till the 30th, but your Lordship shall hear from me by to-morrow's post, and you will receive my letter on Thursday.

I beg you to believe me,

Yours, most sincerely,

CAMDEN.

RIGHT HON. N. VANSITTART TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Great George Street, Nov. 23, 1812.

MY LORD,

I have been honoured with a joint letter from your Lordship and the Marquis Camden, communicating your very liberal and public-spirited intention of contributing one third of the net profits of your respective Tellerships to the public service, during the war. I shall have great satisfaction in announcing to the Board of Treasury, a resolution so honourable to your public feelings; and have the honour to be with sentiments of the highest respect,

Your Lordship's faithful and obedient servant,

N. VANSITTART.

The Parliamentary Session opened by Commission on the 24th of November, and on the 30th, the Prince Regent delivered a speech from the throne. It commenced with regrets for the King's continued indisposition, passed on to praise the valour of our forces in Spain, deplored the withdrawal from the siege of Burgos, and the evacuation of Madrid, communicated new relations of peace and friendship between Great Britain and Russia and Sweden; praised the efforts made by the Emperor of Russia against his invaders, and the confidence he had placed in this country; also communicated a treaty with his Sicilian Majesty, and commented on the war which had broken out with the United States of America, and the favourable results of the campaign. The speech also referred to the estimates, the charter of the East India Company about to expire, the recent riots, and ended with the usual assurances. On the motion of the address, the policy of Ministers was severely handled by both the Marquis Wellesley, and Lord Grenville; and Mr. Canning, in the House of Commons, spoke powerfully to the same purpose. Nevertheless, the address was carried without a division in both houses. On the 22nd of December, Parliament adjourned till the 2nd of February. Two additional illustrations of the Wellesley and Canning schism, must close this chapter of political accidents.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Nov. 25, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

D— came down here on Monday, by Temple's desire, to tell me what particulars he knew about Wellesley's present feelings and intentions. I do not think there was much more than I was aware of, except that he described the connection between Wellesley and Canning as much less close than is commonly supposed. If he is right in this, I should suppose the said connection will very soon terminate in open separation, as the line which Wellesley is described as likely to take, with respect to the Ministers, is one which I am confident Canning will not take without such assurance of good quarters and present pay, as he will most certainly not receive from our army.

In truth, however, I am sick of the whole concern, and am more than ever averse to embark in the contests of a fresh Parliament. I have received an answer from Grey, very kind personally, but strongly declining to undertake what I had proposed to him, and suggesting other expedients which are, I am certain, quite impracticable. The thing must find its own level; for I cannot do what I used, and am disposed to do even less than I could. Nothing restrains me but the resolution, that, as far as in me lays, there shall be no break-up of a party such as the country requires, to control such a court. I will write more from town where I go on Friday.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Nov. 28, 1812.

My dearest Brother,

I have seen Wellesley this morning, and we have had a long conversation—not on projects of political union, but on the subject of debate for Monday.

He is extremely eager, and will, I doubt not, make a very good and very violent attack on Liverpool and Co. Nor do I think we shall find it difficult to keep clear of all that could mutually embarrass our debate. He is fully prepared on Ireland, Spain, and America; and as this must lead into debate, I must not decline any share in it, however little desirous of exhibiting any more on that scene.

I believe there is no stipulated union formed between him and Canning. All the rest must wait for time and accident. Report says, that Canning is grown more hostile to the Government, which is likely enough, since the opinion of their weakness is so much increased.

In the meantime, the characteristics of Court life were quite as singular as those which marked the career of the politician. It must not be forgotten, that by this period there was another sphere for royalty added to those enumerated in a preceding page, which, by many persons, was regarded as almost on a par with Carlton House in dignity and influence, notwithstanding that it put forth no pretensions to be so considered. This was M***** House, the frequent resort of the Prince Regent. His great-great-grand-father, George the First, is reported to have sought the apartments of a lady, a reputed favourite, and entertained himself the whole time of his stay, by clipping, with a pair of scissors, paper, into the shape of a well-known toy. His descendant, however, it may readily be believed, did not amuse himself in a manner so puerile, while enjoying the society of so clever a woman as the Marchioness of H*****; but we have every reason to suppose that his employment was almost as innocent. He shaped politics instead of paper, and cut out cabinets instead of groups of ladies. Like Louis XIV, he may have sought the society of a staid matron, as much for advice as amusement; and, despite the scandal, unjustly we think, created by such demonstrations of his friendship, his fair friend and counsellor was, at heart, perhaps, not less worthy of her post than was Madame de Maintenon. The public press, the caricaturist, and the Houses of Parliament, attacked the intimacy with their sharpest weapons; but it continued to flourish. We have shown what use the Opposition made of their knowledge of its existence; but it is not too much to state that, had the lady not been so consistent a partizan of their political rivals, her name would never have transpired—her reputation could not have been affected.

This "pestilent influence," as it was termed, sank into comparative insignificance compared with the degrading intimacies assiduously cultivated by the Princess of Wales. Her Royal Highness had a house at Blackheath. In this neighbourhood, the Princess often amused herself by dragging her reluctant *suite* after her, in prolonged rambles over the heavy fields and impassable lanes. This was only a little less reprehensible than her midnight scrambles through the streets of London, when going to a public masquerade in disguise. But joining, or rather leading in, vulgar frolics, formed the least objectionable portion of her offences against good taste and decorum. Acquaintances were formed with persons totally out of her sphere, and her intimacy with them became a source of astonishment and alarm, even to the least critical of her attendants. Some of these vagaries soon became more widely known, and did not fail to reach Carlton House, where they very naturally increased the long-cherished desire for a divorce—a desire the Ministers were obliged to acknowledge they could not gratify.

The Opposition had for some time contemplated the possibility of making political capital for themselves out of the position of the Princess; and a variety of speculations were indulged in by some of the leaders in which their advocacy of her cause formed a prominent feature. Francis Horner had written a letter to John Allen (September 14th, 1811). "I suppose the coronation of his wife may be left to the new king's fancy. If he means any further indignities, or to impose any hardships upon her, it will be disgraceful to the nation to suffer them. With all her folly and low vices, she is a stranger; and though she has not conducted herself in her disgrace so as to deserve any respect, she has already been used very ill."[1] Probably, nothing so illogical ever was written by a clever man. Why a nation that had been outraged and scandalised for years by this woman's acknowledged "folly and low vices," should be disgraced by allowing the mildest penalty that could be inflicted upon their possessor, we can no more explain than the rest of the sentence; for if she did not deserve any respect for the manner in which she had conducted herself *in her disgrace*, what claim could she put forward for more honourable treatment than she received? As for her being a stranger, Her Royal Highness had been seventeen years in the country, and few persons born in it had had better opportunities of knowing its usages. It is also quite untrue that the Princess had been "used very ill." Let any unprejudiced person, thoroughly acquainted with her career and disposition, consider what female society must have become, had such a woman been placed at its head; and then let him judge the proceedings of the Government to prevent this. Even had all the accusations against her husband been true, they would have afforded no justification whatever for her conduct.

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[1] "Memoirs and Correspondence," Vol. II., p. 103.

Among the inexcusable proceedings of the Princess—and their name was legion—was an announcement in the "Morning Chronicle," of the publication of a private correspondence, apparently the confidential communications of the late minister, and of other friends and counsellors of her Royal Highness, now members of the Government. Ostensibly it was to make known her "wrongs," to the public—really it was to extort something by way of hush money, from her imprudent correspondents. She was brooding over a great revenge, and her principal attendants were most unpleasantly made accomplices before the fact. "Her Lady-in-waiting said to me," observes an eye and ear-witness "all the day long her Royal Highness continues to talk of wishing people dead, and I must not dare to contradict the wish I have been an accomplice in murder many a time, if silence gives consent."[1]

But her great source of enjoyment about this period, was a cottage at Bayswater, where according to the same authority, "she received a set of persons wholly unfit to be admitted to her society." Her unseemly frolics were indulged in without restraint, varied only with complaints and schemes equally unbecoming. "To kill the Regent; then go abroad with a Court of her own making, of which the fiddler is to be king; this is her favourite plan."[1] It so happened that the first part of the plan had no immediate chance of success: she then turned her attention to the second. The musician, however, preferred enjoying his royalty where he was.

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. I., p. 74.

Another amusement of her Royal Highness was to influence the Princess Charlotte to oppose the wishes of her father. It was proposed that the Duchess of Leeds should succeed Lady de Clifford, as instructress to the young Princess, but it was insinuated that governesses were now no longer wanted. "After dinner," states our informant, "the Princess received a letter from the Princess Charlotte, who told her she had written to the Prince, her father, refusing, but in a very respectful manner, to have any more governesses, and gave Princess of Wales an account of a dispute she had with the Queen and her aunts about it. *The Princess of Wales was in the third heaven of delight.*"

Her Royal Highness, it must in justice be stated, had a more serious occupation. This was, preparing, as it was said, under the auspices of Mr. Brougham, an attack upon the Prince and the Government, in the shape of a declaration of her rights and wrongs, from the publication of which she anticipated the most important advantages. But the quarrel between father and daughter was not neglected during its composition. The Prince went to Windsor with the Lord Chancellor, but found the Princess Charlotte perfectly refractory. The arguments of the Regent, the Queen, the Princesses, and Lord Eldon were equally unavailing. "Charlotte never spoke or moved a muscle," said the Princess of Wales, "and the Prince and the Chancellor departed as they came. Nothing could be more determined or immoveable than she was. In short, *we must frighten the man into doing something*, otherwise he will do nothing; and if mother and daughter cannot do this, nothing can. On Sunday, I shall send my letter; but I do not think *gentle* means will ever avail—*if we were in past times!*" and her Royal Highness looked quite fearful as she spoke.[1] The Princess of Wales's enjoyment of her daughter's determination, was followed by tears of vexation. The next day, her Royal Highness received a communication from the Princess Charlotte, stating that she had received the Duchess of Leeds as her governess.

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. I., p. 194.

Events of infinitely more importance were in process of development about the same period. To these we must now refer. Never had the eye beheld so magnificent an army as that which, under the command of the great Napoleon, crossed the Niemen towards the latter end of June, for the conquest of Russia. Infantry, cavalry, and artillery, in the finest condition, splendidly equipped, with a corresponding train of baggage-waggons, and other carriages for transport, for several days filed over the river in numbers that literally could not be counted, so immense was the host. His Generals were worthy of his soldiers; and the latter were not more formidable in numbers than in discipline. It was deservedly styled "the Grand Army;" and comprised 301,976 men, 85,000 horses, and more than 1000 guns; but others shortly afterwards followed, which raised the aggregate to 647,158 fighting men. Such it was in summer. Before half the winter had expired, by captivity, by battle, and by cold, this wondrous armament had diminished into a mere section. 125,000 had been killed, 132,000 perished by cold or fatigue, 190,000 were prisoners, exclusive of 3,348 generals and other officers: 75 eagles and 929 cannon were captured; and the illustrious Commander saved himself from the same fate by a timely flight, which, on the 18th of December, enabled him to reach the Tuileries in safety.

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[1] "Diary," Vol. I., p. 192.

The story of this unparalleled disaster must be sufficiently known; but one of the material causes of its extent and completeness, appears to have escaped general notice. Vast has been the glory which Russia has claimed for this thorough discomfiture of her formidable enemy; but the military advantages obtained by her during the campaign, form but a small item towards that extraordinary overthrow; and her legitimate successes may be said to have owed much to the material assistance and encouragement the Emperor Alexander received from the British Government. The chief element in this triumphant resistance, may be traced to the counsels of that member of the Cabinet who had supported the cause of Russia among his colleagues, and enabled her to make so firm a stand against what must otherwise have been an overwhelming invasion. Lord Castlereagh had contributed more towards this humiliation of Napoleon, than the Russian chroniclers have thought proper to admit. He made their army an instrument both of offence and defence, such as the Russian empire had never before produced. The rest was accomplished solely by a climate that did them better service in the campaign, than a dozen Barclay de Tollys, Bagrations, and Kutusoffs could have given, had they been seconded by the entire male population of the country capable of bearing arms.

It should not be forgotten, that a few years before, the Czar had confessed that he had been forced to make peace with Napoleon, because he had been denied the assistance from England he required. If the absence of such aid, so largely contributed to that amicable arrangement with France, called the Treaty of Tilsit, it is but fair to attribute to its presence, a corresponding share in the terrible repulse and desolation of "The Grand Army," with which her formidable Emperor had sought to conquer the dominions of his late ally.

In these observations, the writer has no idea of diminishing the value and importance of the patriotic impulse which was carefully fanned into a flame at the approach of the invader—the bravery of the Russians could not be disputed; but patriotism, the most glowing, and valour the most demonstrative, without an ample provision of what is properly called the sinews of war, have often signally failed in every object for which they were excited. It has been so in Poland, in the Tyrol, in Hungary, and in other places—it might have been so in Russia, had she been allowed to wage the contest no better prepared for it, than she was in 1807. Lord Castlereagh had been entrusted with all the arrangements for placing Russia in a condition to cope with her great adversary. The result has been described.

Temptations were not wanted to draw England into earnest co-operation with Russia. When the French were in Moscow, the Baron Von Stein, a German statesman of great sagacity, in the confidence of the Czar, strongly pressed upon his principal advisers, Count Münster and Pozzo di Borgo, the advantage to be derived from inducing Great Britain to take the lead in a settlement of the affairs of Germany; when Napoleon was retreating, every argument was employed upon the British Government to get them to accept a German legion, and take the field with as little delay as possible between the Elbe and the Rhine; moreover, Von Stein forwarded from St. Petersburg, through the English ambassador, a memorial, suggesting a division of Germany between Austria and Prussia, and the addition of Holland to the dominions of England.[1] Another project equally seductive, was drawn up by Count Münster. This was the creation of a kingdom, composed of the Netherlands, Hanover, Westphalia, and the neighbouring

[1] "Das Leben des Ministers, Freiherrn vom Stein."

provinces, to pass to a male heir of the Royal Family of England, when the Princess Charlotte should succeed to the throne. Gneisenau, another of these clever disposers of nations, also strongly recommended to the British Government, the appropriation of the Netherlands, and of all territorial conquests on the continent. Most probably, these temptations came from the Czar, with the expectation of being allowed to realize large profits in some other direction; but the reply of Lord Castlereagh was of a similar character to that given by his distinguished predecessor, when Napoleon offered to divide the continent with George the Third—the same in substance as when the late Emperor Nicholas offered to England, through Sir Hamilton Seymour as liberal a bribe to be permitted to take advantage of "the sick man." Lord Castlereagh appears to have remembered Tilsit, and to have kept steadily in view the honour, as well as the real interests of the British Empire.[1]

The gigantic power and colossal resources of Russia, have been dwelt upon by certain writers, evidently from a firm conviction that the one existed on a solid foundation, and the others were inexhaustible for purposes of offence; but recent events have enabled the present generation to ascertain the true character of that magnificent *mirage*, which satisfied their fathers of the overwhelming greatness of this prodigious empire. With such a knowledge of a carefully cultivated delusion, it is impossible to read without a smile, the following laboured deductions.

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[1] "Despatches of Viscount Castlereagh."

"It has been observed that Russia can hardly fail in the end to obtain the victory over all her enemies, for she has two powerful enemies—*time* and *space*. Relying with well-founded confidence on *the inaccessible nature of the Muscovite territory*, secured from attack on the north and east by the ices of the Pole, and the deserts of Tartary—open to invasion by the European powers *only* on the frontier of Poland, and capable there of wearing out even the greatest armies of the Western world, by simply retreating until the invader is enveloped in *clouds of Asiatic horse*, or finds his winding-sheet in the snows of an arctic winter, the Cabinet of St. Petersburg has the means, without material danger to itself, of profiting by the weakness and dissensions of its enemies. By never provoking war till a favourable opportunity occurs of prosecuting it to advantage, it can march, *without ever receding*, from one acquisition to another."[1]

This was the impression that generally existed some forty years since—we now know better.

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[1] "Alison's History of Europe," LXXI. 43.

APPENDIX.

THE
PRINCESS CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK.

As Lord Grenville was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when the marriage was negociated between the Prince of Wales and the Princess Caroline of Brunswick, it might be imagined that he had incurred a share in the responsibility that attaches to every one who assisted in bringing about that most "untoward event." It is but justice to his memory, to show how completely he was innocent of any participation in it.

It appears that the first Lord Malmesbury, while occupied in watching the intrigue of Prussia with the French Convention, in the autumn of the year 1794, received at Hanover, on the 14th of November, the nomination to a special mission to the Court of Brunswick, to demand the Princess Caroline in marriage for the Prince of Wales. There appears considerable mystification respecting the terms of this mission. The nomination arrived *by the post*; and it is affirmed that, as it came direct from the King, and was extremely brief in its purport, it admitted of no reference to his Majesty's Ministers. In an absolute monarchy, such missions may be common enough; but it is certainly not in accordance with the constitutional character of the British empire. The reader, however, should be reminded that, at this period, the Prince of Wales was involved in pecuniary embarrassments to an immense amount, that had long been to him a source of the deepest pain and humiliation—that a remedy for so grave an evil had been suggested in a marriage, on which occasion Parliament was to make the most liberal arrangements to emancipate his Royal Highness from his liabilities, and enable him to commence a new career, with every prospect of happiness. The Prince having acceded to these proposals, the King named one of the daughters of his sister, the Duchess of Brunswick, as his Majesty's selection of a bride for his son, and appointed Lord Malmesbury to negociate the marriage without delay. The plenipotentiary lost no time in proceeding to the Court of Brunswick—not to make the object of his mission known there, because it had preceded him; but to claim the Princess, and carry her to England. How he executed this mission, he must be allowed to relate in his own words.[1]

The distinguished writer, in the Diary he wrote at the time, has preserved many very curious notices of the various members of the ducal family, to whose Court he was accredited, with whom he was in daily intercourse, and some still more curious conversations; but we quote only passages that indicate the character of the Princess, and show the progress of his negociation.

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[1] The following extracts are taken from the "Diaries and Correspondence of James Harris, Earl of Malmesbury." The 2nd edition, Vol. III., commencing at p. 148.

1794. *Thursday, November* 28. "The Princess Caroline much embarrassed on my first being presented to her—pretty face—not expressive of softness—her figure not graceful—fine eyes—good hand—tolerable teeth, but going—fair hair, and light eye-brows—good bust, but what the French call *des épaules impertinentes. Vastly happy with her future expectations.*"

December 5th. "After dinner, he (the Duke of Brunswick) held a very long and very sensible discourse with me about the Princess Caroline. * * * The Duke requested me to recommend to her discretion, not to ask questions, and, above all, not to be free in giving opinions of persons and things aloud; and he hinted, delicately, but very pointedly, at the free and unreserved manners of the Duchess, who at times is certainly apt to forget her audience. He desired me to advise her never to show any jealousy of the Prince, and that if he had any *goûts*, not to notice them."

December 6th. Mademoiselle Hertzfeldt (the Duke's mistress) repeats to me what the Duke had before said; stated that she was not clever, or ill-disposed, but of a temper easily wrought on; and had no tact. She said my advice would do more good than the

Duke's, as, although she respected him, she also feared him, and considered him as a severe, rather than an affectionate father—that she had no respect for her mother, and was inattentive to her when she dared."

The observations of the Ambassador, with the information derived from the best sources, were far from satisfactory. But, as appears from the interesting work, for which the public are indebted to his grandson, the present Lord Malmesbury, he had no option, but to accept the Princess, "all faults and errors, notwithstanding." What he considered to be in his power, he attempted, and gave the young lady, on the following day, advice of which she evidently stood very much in need. "Sat next Princess Caroline at supper. I advise her to avoid familiarity; to have no *confidantes*; to avoid giving any opinion; to approve, but not to admire excessively; to be perfectly silent on politics and party; to be very attentive and respectful to the Queen; to endeavour, at all events, to be well with her." Had she followed this good counsel, instead of acting in perfect opposition to every portion of it, it is probable that she might have lived a very different life. But it was not in her nature to pay the slightest attention to wholesome instruction. It appeared to be forgotten as soon as heard.

A day or two afterwards, Lord Malmesbury became her adviser at greater length, and apparently with increased earnestness. In reply, she was inquisitive about a lady supposed to have much influence with the

Prince of Wales, and added, "I am determined never to appear jealous. I know the Prince is *léger*, and am prepared on this point." "I said," writes the Ambassador, "I did not believe she would have any occasion to exercise this very wise resolution, which I commended highly; and entreated her, if she saw any symptoms of a *goût* in the Prince, or if any of the women about her should, under the love of fishing in troubled waters, endeavour to excite a jealousy in her mind, on no account to allow it to manifest itself; that reproaches and sourness never reclaimed any body; that it only served as an advantageous contrast to the contrary qualities in the rival; and that the surest way of recovering a tottering affection, was softness, enduring, and caresses; that I knew enough of the Prince, to be quite sure that he could not withstand such conduct, while a contrary one would *probably* make him disagreeable and peevish, and certainly force him to be false and dissembling."

There seems something approaching the prophetic, in the probability here held out—but with the Diarist's knowledge of the present, the future was extremely easy to indicate. His knowledge increased day by day; additional revelations from different members of her family, and from Mademoiselle Hertzfeldt; and frequent opportunities for confidential conversation with the Princess, unpleasantly confirmed his first impressions. Nevertheless, he wrote letters to the Prince of Wales, and continued acting mentor to the Princess, in conversations of increasing delicacy and confidence.

In one that took place on the 16th of December, a little secret information escapes, that adds considerably to the interest of the situation. "She talks about the Duke of Clarence," writes the Diarist, "whom she prefers to the Duke of York; and it struck me to-day, for the first time, that he originally put her into the Prince's head, and that with a view to plague the Duke and Duchess of York, whom he hates, and whom the Prince no longer likes; well knowing the Princess Caroline and Duchess of York dislike each other, and that this match would be particularly unpleasant to her and the Duke. I praise the Duke of York to her, and speak with great applause of the behaviour of the Duchess, who, by her discretion and conduct, has conciliated to herself the good will of the whole nation. I did this to pique her, and to make her anxious to do the same."

The entry proceeds: "She has no *fond*, no fixed character, a light and flighty mind," and he proceeds to read her a grave lecture on a desire she had expressed, of becoming popular. It is singular, how all these characteristics, against the influence of which, the Ambassador was constantly warning her, subsequently developed themselves without the slightest attempt at control.

The conversations continued, and the Princess, who had previously presented him with a diamond watch, more than once expressed a wish, that on her arrival in England, Lord Malmesbury should fill a distinguished post in her household—far from acting upon this wish, however, he prudently dissuaded her.

On the 20th of December, he writes, "Walk with Sir B. Boothby. We regret the apparent facility of the Princess Caroline's character—her want of reflection and substance. Agree that, with a steady man, she would do vastly well, but with one of a different description, there are great risks."

Lord Malmesbury contented himself with his confidential conversations with the Princess, "with more freedom than usual," which were sometimes anything but desired. For instance, "She talked of her aunt, the abbess — said she had endeavoured to inspire her with a diffidence and distrust of me—had represented me as *un homme dangereux*. I tried to get rid of this sort of conversation, but the Princess stuck by it, and I was forced to say that I believe her aunt had forgotten that twenty years had elapsed since she had seen me or heard of me; and that, besides, such an insinuation was a tacit accusation of my being very *foolishly* unprincipled. She said she meant well, that she, perhaps, thought too partially of me herself, and was afraid for her. It was in vain to attempt to turn the subject. She went on during the whole supper —was in high spirits, and laughed unmercifully at her aunt, and her supposed partiality for me."

A most extraordinary conversation between a plenipotentiary, and the selected bride of his future sovereign. But this was only the first of a series. On the 28th, more delicate subjects were approached, in consequence of the Princess having received an anonymous letter, "aimed at Lady ——; its object to frighten the Princess with the idea that she would lead her into an affair of gallantry, and be ready to be convenient on such an occasion. This did not frighten the Princess, although it did the Duke and Duchess, and on my perceiving this, I told her Lady —— would be more cautious than to risk such an audacious measure; and that, besides, it was death to presume to approach a Princess of Wales, and no man would be daring enough to think of it. She asked me whether I was in earnest. I said such was our law; that anybody who presumed to love her was guilty of high treason, and [would be] punished with death, if she was weak enough to listen to him: so also, would she. *This startled her.*"

All this, if not very edifying, is eminently characteristic. A few lines entered on the last day of the month, when they had started on their homeward journey, are *en suite.* "Princess wanted me to be in the same coach with her. I resisted it as impossible, from its being improper. She was disposed to laugh at the matter. I discountenanced it."

From this date, the revelations of her character become more and more unpromising. On the practice of benevolence being recommended to her, she gives ten louis to a beggar, and when he admires the coin, offers the same number of double louis, very seriously, to her astonished instructor: saying, "Cela ne me fait rien—je ne m'en soucie pas—je vous prie de les prendre."

In vain he continues to direct her as to her behaviour. "Princess Caroline very *gauche* at cards—speaks without thinking—gets too easy—calls the ladies she never saw, "Mon cœur, ma chère, ma petite." I notice it, and reprove it strongly. The Princess, for the first time, disposed to take it amiss. I do not pretend to observe it." This was on January 4th. In consequence of the French army having advanced near Baren—too near their intended route to make it safe to continue their journey in that direction, the travellers were obliged to turn back. The Plenipotentiary, apparently pleased with the obedience of his charge, in following his directions, gives an estimate of her character a trifle more favourable than the former one, but sums up much in the same manner. "In short, the Princess, in the hands of a steady and sensible man would probably turn out well, but where it is likely she will find faults analogous to her own, she will fail."

On the 12th of the month, there is more fault-finding. "Presidente Walmoden, Princess Caroline affects to dislike her, to call her a bore, &c. I say she ought to ask her to play with her; she does it but reluctantly, and during the party whispers and giggles with some of the young women. I notice this to her afterwards, as what I could not approve; I do it as gently, but as strongly as I dare. She at first disposed to contend the point with me, but at last confesses I am right, and promises to correct herself." In spite of this promise, two days later, there is the following entry:—"Princess Caroline foolish about Paget—uncivil to him—I remonstrate—

she says she disliked him at first sight—I reprove this sort of hasty judgment—read a lecture upon it—she argues—is inwardly angry, but conceals it." Again, on the 17th, she was reproved for her levity. On the 18th, Princess Caroline very *missish* at supper. I much fear these habits are irrecoverably rooted in her; she is naturally curious and a gossip. She is quick at observing, and she has a silly pride of finding out everything—she thinks herself particularly acute in discovering *likings*, and this leads her at times to the most improper remarks and conversation. I am determined of taking an opportunity of correcting her, *coûte qui coûte*."

On the 21st, "Princess Caroline has a tooth drawn —she sends it down to me by her page—nasty and indelicate." On the 23rd, after another lecture, on retiring, she said, 'she hoped the Prince would let her see me, since she never could expect any one would give her such good and such free advice as myself; and,' added she, 'I confess I could not bear it from any one but you.'"

Despite of this tender effect, on February 3, his charge was again at fault. "Princess too childish, and over merry at supper." Very shortly, however, more serious matters came to be reprehended.

February 18, "Argument with the Princess about her toilette. She piques herself on dressing quick. I disapprove this. She maintains her point; I, however, desire Madame Busche to explain to her, that the Prince is very delicate, and that he expects a long and very careful *toilette de propreté*, of which she has no idea. On the contrary, she neglects it sadly, and *offensive* from this neglect. Madame Busche executes her commission well, and the Princess comes out the next day, well washed *all over*."

The Prince of Wales was known to be one of the most fastidious men in Europe, and yet for him such a wife had been selected.

Another lecture was given on the 28th, on impropriety of conduct: again on March 1. "I also took frequent opportunities of speaking *very seriously* to the Princess Caroline, on her not showing due respect to the Duchess, her mother—of her sneering and slighting her; and on this point, I went, perhaps, beyond the bounds of *decorum*, as it appeared to me of the last consequence to make her feel, in the most strong manner, the necessity of her attending to *these sort of duties*. She, at first, took it amiss, but very soon after, admitted the truth of what I said, and observed." Apparently her invariable practice—but attended with as invariable a result—complete oblivion.

On March 6th, another serious entry occurs in the diary, and we should be doing injustice to the zealous mentor, and his careless pupil, if we did not give it entire. "I had two conversations with the Princess Caroline. One on the toilette, on cleanliness, and on delicacy of speaking. On these points, I endeavoured, as far as was possible for a man, to inculcate the necessity of great and nice attention to every part of dress; as well as to what was hid, as what was seen. (I knew she wore coarse petticoats, coarse shifts, and thread stockings, and these never well washed or changed often enough.) I observed that a long toilette was necessary, and gave her no credit for boasting that hers was a short one. What I could not say myself on this point, I got said through women; through Madame Busche, and afterwards through Mrs. Harcourt. It is remarkable, how amazingly on this point her education had been neglected, and how much her mother, although an Englishwoman, was inattentive to it. My other conversation was on the Princess's speaking slightingly of the Duchess—being peevish towards her, and often laughing at her, or about her. On this point, I talked very seriously indeed—said that nothing was so extremely improper, so radically wrong; that it was impossible, if she reflected a moment, that she should not be sorry for everything of the kind which escaped, and I assured her it was the more improper, from the tender affection the Duchess had for her. The Princess felt all this, and it made a temporary impression; but in this, as on all other subjects, I have had but too many opportunities to observe that her heart is very very light, and unsusceptible of strong or lasting feelings. In some respects, this may make her happier, but certainly not better. I, however, must say," adds the Plenipotentiary, for whom there was balm in Gilead, "that on the idea being suggested to her, that I should remain on business in Germany, and not be allowed to attend her to England, she was most extremely afflicted, even to tears, and spoke to me with a kindness and feeling I was highly gratified to find in her."

We cannot help coming to the conclusion that his mission would have been more satisfactory, had Lord Malmesbury found in her Serene Highness something more in unison with her position and prospects. Is it possible to imagine a young woman likely to confer so little credit on either? In a few days she was to be the wife of the Heir Apparent of the British Empire; to be at the head of all the elegance and fashion of the Court of St. James's; and to be domesticated with those models of courtly propriety, the Queen and the Princesses; this singular example of Court breeding, who was obliged to be continually lectured on the use of soap and water, and the advantages of clean linen; who was equally ignorant of the minor accomplishments of writing and spelling; who habitually sinned against all the laws of propriety; who constantly insulted her mother, and was vulgarly familiar with strangers—in short, who was ignorant of every element of moral and intellectual education, and persisted in betraying habits that girls of humble rank would have carefully controlled. Such was the destined partner for life of a man so spoilt by indulgence, that his union with a sensible, prudent and amiable woman, presented the only chance that could exist for his reformation. Something more, even than this—important though it was—was demanded; security for the honour of a nation, which is always more or less bound up with the dignity and respectability of those set in authority over it.

On April 1, he was again obliged to reprove the

Princess for indelicacy of language. This appears to have been for the last time, for on the 5th he presented his charge at St. James's. But so little had she profited by his frequent lectures, that when admitted to the presence of the Prince, she was evidently *not presentable.* The memorable incident that occurred, is thus related.

"I immediately notified the arrival to the King and Prince of Wales; the last came immediately. I, according to the established etiquette, introduced (no one else being in the room) the Princess Caroline to him. She very properly, in consequence of my saying to her it was the right mode of proceeding, attempted to kneel to him. He raised her, (gracefully enough,) and embraced her—said barely one word, turned round, retired to a distant part of the apartment, and calling me to him, said: 'Harris, I am not well; pray get me a glass of brandy.' I said: 'Sir, had you not better have a glass of water?' Upon which he, much out of humour, said with an oath: 'No. I will go directly to the Queen:' and away he went. The Princess, left, during this short visit, alone, was in a state of astonishment, and on my joining her said: 'Mon Dieu! est-ce que le Prince est toujours comme cela? Je le trouve très gros, et nullement aussi beau que son portrait.' I said his Royal Highness was naturally a good deal affected and flurried at this first interview, but she certainly would find him different at dinner. She was disposed to further criticisms on this occasion, which would have embarrassed me very much to answer, if, luckily, the King had not ordered me to attend him."

Lord Malmesbury appeared to pretend ignorance of the cause of the sudden and striking demonstration of the Prince, who so prided himself on his good breeding, that only a very extraordinary provocation could have made him behave in such a manner; but if the reader refers to the first intimation the Ambassador has given of the uncleanliness of his charge, he will find a ready solution of the mystery. His Royal Highness, as we have already intimated, was singularly fastidious; and he could not control a sudden revulsion of feeling. But we must leave the Diarist to complete the picture.

"At dinner, at which all those who attended the Princess from Greenwich assisted, and the honours of which were done by Lord Stopford as Vice-Chamberlain, I was far from satisfied with the Princess's behaviour; it was flippant, rattling, affecting raillery and wit, and throwing out coarse, vulgar hints about Lady ———, who was present, and though mute, *le diable n'en perdait rien.* The Prince was evidently disgusted; and this unfortunate dinner fixed his dislike, which, when left to herself, the Princess had not the talent to remove; but by still observing the same giddy manners, and attempts at cleverness and coarse sarcasm, increased it till it became positive hatred."

What other result could have been expected? The Princess had thrown to the winds all the good advice she had received. The lectures at Brunswick were forgotten in London; the exhortations so carefully inculcated about an elaborate toilette; about propriety of manners, and delicacy of language; about improper familiarity and indecorous trifling, were totally unheeded. She behaved worse and worse every day, particularly before the select company that met at the dinner-table when the marriage festivities were going on.

"After one of these dinners," writes the diplomatist, "where *the Prince of Orange* was present, and at which the Princess had behaved very lightly, and even improperly, the Prince took me into his closet, and asked me how I liked this sort of manners. I could not conceal my disapprobation of them, and took this opportunity of repeating to him the substance of what the Duke [of Brunswick] had so often said to me, that it was expedient *de la tenir serrée;* that she had been brought up very strictly! and if she was not strictly kept, would, from high spirits and little thought, certainly emancipate too much." To this curious explanation, the Prince said: 'I see it but too plainly—but why, Harris, *did not you tell me so before*, or write to me from Brunswick?' On receiving this very reasonable question, Lord Malmesbury replied, that he was not sent on a *discretionary commission*, but with *the most positive commands to ask Princess Caroline in marriage and nothing more*; that he satisfied himself with a strict performance of his orders, which, he adds, "were as *limited* as they were *imperative.* That still," he continues, "had I discovered notorious or glaring defects, or such as were of a nature to render the union unseemly, I should have felt it as a bounded duty to have stated this; but it must have been *directly to the King*, and to no one else."

It seems almost incomprehensible that a member of the State of such high importance as the Heir Apparent, should have a wife selected for him, who apparently did not possess a single domestic, intellectual, or moral qualification for the honourable position she was to fill; and that it was not permitted that he should be made acquainted with her characteristics, till too late to profit by the information. Very natural is the close of the paragraph in the Diary. "I saw it did not please, and left a *rankle* in his mind." And a little further on, when describing the marriage ceremony, which took place on the 8th of April, he says, "The Prince very civil and gracious, but I thought I could perceive he was not quite sincere, *and certainly unhappy*; and as a proof of it, he had manifestly had recourse to wine, or spirits." The hopeless misery of his situation must have driven him to artificial excitement. We fancy there were but few of his fashionable contemporaries who would not have sought the same resource under such a trial.

The last words of Lord Malmesbury, recording this transaction, must not be omitted. "It is impossible to conceive or foresee *any comfort* from this connection, in which I lament very much having taken any share, purely *passive* as it was."

Lord Malmesbury's grandson, the editor of his "Memoirs and Diary," assures us that his kinsman *more than once* was on the point of expressing his opinion to Lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt, of the unsuitableness of the Princess Caroline for the Prince of Wales;[1] but that "the circumstances of his mission, and his belief that her faults were of a remediable character," prevented him.

Though there is no evidence that he consulted his immediate superior, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, on the subject, in the despatches he forwarded to Lord Grenville (as published in the volume from which we have quoted), he did open his mind a little to the Duke of Portland. In a letter, dated from Hanover, on the 27th of January, he endeavours to excuse the removal of his charge from Osnabruck, by stating that he anticipated the arrival of the Comte d'Artois (afterwards Charles X. of France), and "felt it highly improper that the Princess of Wales, and a fugitive French Prince should remain in the same place!" The Count, however, was not the only object of his alarm, as he indicates in his Diary, under the date, February 20. "Princess out of humour. Very nonsensical confidence about Prince of Orange—*cannot be committed to writing*." He further excused himself for not taking her back to Brunswick, because the ladies there were in the habit of behaving too familiarly to her; and it was most essential, "in times like these," that she should feel properly the dignity of her high situation, and act up to it; which, he elsewhere proves, he never could get her to do. He then assures the Duke, that the manner in which she had conducted herself since she left Brunswick, "has been the most becoming possible." He ends with stating his conviction that the two months' delay in his return, was "a most fortunate circumstance," as it "will form and shape the Princess's mind and manners to her situation."

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[1] "Diaries and Correspondence," Vol. III., p. 213.

At eight o'clock, on the evening of the 8th of April, a brilliant company assembled in the public apartments of St. James's Palace, and half-an-hour later the procession was formed, and proceeded to the Chapel Royal in the following order:

PROCESSION OF THE PRINCESS.

Drums and trumpets.
Kettle drums.
Sergeant trumpeter,
who filed off at the door of the chapel.
Sir Clement Cotterell Dormer, Master of the Ceremonies.
Her Serene Highness's Gentleman Usher, between two senior Heralds.
Right Hon. Charles Grenville, His Majesty's Vice-Chamberlain.
Marquis of Salisbury, Lord Chamberlain.
The two Hon. Ladies Stewart, daughters of Lord Galloway, strewing flowers.

HER SERENE HIGHNESS PRINCESS CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK,

in a nuptial habit—a royal robe; silver tissue petticoat, covered with silver Venetian net and silver tassels; body and train of silver tissue, festooned on each side with large cord and tassels; sleeves and tippet fine point lace, and the bands of the sleeves embroidered with plumes of feathers; a royal mantle of crimson velvet, trimmed with ermine, silver cord and tassels.

Her Royal Highness was led by the Duke of Clarence,
and attended by
The Marchioness of Townshend, the Countess of Jersey,
The Countess of Carnarvon, the Countess of Cholmondeley.
Ladies of the Household.
Miss Colman, Miss Erskine,
Miss Poyntz, Miss Bruhl.
Followed by
Lady Mary Osborne, Lady Caroline Villiers,
Lady Charlotte Spencer, Lady Charlotte Legge,
Bridesmaids.

PROCESSION OF THE PRINCE,

arranged in the same order as that of the Princess, with the addition of the officers of his Royal Highness's Household.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales
in his Collar of the Order of the Garter, supported by
the Bachelor Dukes of Bedford and Roxborough.

PROCESSION OF THE KING.

Two Sergeants-at-Arms.
Drums and trumpets.
The Knight Marshal.
Pursuivants.
Heralds.
Duke of Portland, Duke of Leeds.
Duke of Dorset, Lord Steward of the Household.

Provincial Kings-of-Arms.
Earl of Chatham, Lord Privy Seal.
Earl of Mansfield, Lord President of the Council.
Bishop of London.   Lord Chancellor.
Archbishop of Canterbury.
Two Sergeants-at-Arms.
Gentleman Usher.
Sir Isaac Heard, Garter Principal King-of-Arms, with his Sceptre.
Gentleman Usher.
Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal, with his staff.
Princes of the Blood Royal.
Lord Chamberlain.
Sword of State.
Vice-Chamberlain.

HIS MAJESTY.

In the Collar of the Order of the Garter.
Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard.
Colonel of the Life-Guards in Waiting.
Groom of the Bed-chamber in Waiting.
William Price, Esq., Vice-Chamberlain to the Queen.
Lord Harcourt, Queen's Master of the Horse.

HER MAJESTY.

Lord Morton, Queen's Lord Chamberlain.

THE PRINCESSES.

Each supported by her Gentleman Usher.
Ladies of her Majesty's Bed-chamber.
Maids of Honour.
Women of the Bed-chamber.

The marriage ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishop of London, the former standing on the right, the latter on the left of the altar. At the conclusion of the anthem, the procession returned, much in the same order as before, except that the Prince led the Princess, and was attended by two married Dukes—Beaufort and Leeds.

Afterwards the company went to Buckingham House to a magnificent supper, and about twelve o'clock the Prince and Princess retired to Carlton House, where, the next morning, they were visited by the King and Queen, before they set out for Windsor, where they were followed by their Royal Highnesses. Illuminations, fire-works, and other public demonstrations, testified the interest taken by all classes, in this union, and several addresses of felicitation were presented to the King, the Queen, and to their Royal Highnesses by different public bodies. The answer of the Prince of Wales to that of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London, thanks them for their congratulations, and expresses satisfaction at the interest his marriage had excited, and gratification at the expression of their affectionate attachment, but maintains an ominous silence respecting the Princess, and his prospects of happiness. Grand festivities were continued at Court, and entertainments given by the principal nobility for some time after the nuptials.

Every day aggravated the evils of this *mésalliance.* The Princess, who, at Brunswick, had been so curious about Lady ——, whose intimacy with the Prince of Wales was well known at her father's Court, and who, on her arrival at St. James's Palace, rattled on before strangers with coarse and vulgar raillery, respecting this lady *in her presence,* accepted her as one of her attendants, and almost as eagerly took her into her confidence. It wanted but this to make the *imbroglio* intolerable. It is probable that Lady —— made the most of her position, for which there is no doubt she applied with no amiable motive, and the intractable natures of this royal pair were driven into an irreconcilable quarrel. On the birth of their first child, the Princess Charlotte, the Prince of Wales separated from his wife entirely. This proceeding, unexplained, appeared so harsh, that it procured the Princess many powerful friends, among whom, the warmest, and the most zealous, was always the King. Whether it was, because the marriage was his own act—whether from affection to his sister's child—or whether influenced by his feelings against his son; certain it is, that George III. countenanced his daughter-in-law in a manner that much increased the unpleasantness that existed between father and son. The Princess may have deceived him, which was no difficult matter for her; certain it is, that he more than once strongly expressed his belief in her wrongs. Queen Charlotte, she did not deceive—no such expression ever was uttered by that admirable lady—and if there was one person the Princess of Wales detested as much as she did her husband, it was her husband's mother.

Whatever may be thought of the mission of Lord Malmesbury—his prudence when it was over was most exemplary. He did not become the Chamberlain of the Princess of Wales, as she had desired at Brunswick; it appears as though he most carefully avoided her society for many years afterwards.

END OF VOL. I.

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